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LIFE OF MAHOMET

AND

HISTORY OF ISLAM,

TO THE ERA OF THE HEGIRA.

WITH INTRODUCTORY CHAPTERS ON THE ORIGINAL SOURCES FOR THE BIOGRAPHY OF MAHOMET, AND ON THE PRE-ISLAMITE HISTORY OF ARABIA.

BY

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THE

BIOGRAPHY OF MAHOMET,

AND

RISE OF ISLAM.

CHAPTER SECOND.

From the Youth of Mahomet to his Fortieth Year.

THE next event in the life of the youthful Mahomet is connected with events of a wider and a more stirring interest.

The Sacrilegious war between 580 and 590 A.D.

Between the years 580 and 590, A.D. the vale of Mecca and the surrounding country were disturbed by one of those bloody feuds so frequently excited by the fiery pride, and prolonged by the revengeful temper of the nation.

A Fair held annually at Ocâtz.

In Dhul Cáada, the sacred month preceding the customary days of Pilgrimage, an annual fair was held at Ocâtz, where, within an easy three days' journey of Mecca, the shady palm and cool fountain offered a grateful resting place to the merchant and the traveller after their toilsome journey.*

* Ocâtz lay between Tâif and Nakhla. There were two other fairs, but of less note, held near Mecca; one at Mujanna in the vicinity of Marr al Tzahrân, the other at Dzul Majâj behind Arafat. *M. C. de Perceval*, vol. i. p. 296.

Chivalrous and poetical contests.

Goods were bartered, vain-glorious contests (those characteristic exhibitions of Bedouin chivalry) were held, and verses recited by the bards of the various tribes. The successful poems produced at this national gathering were treated with distinguished honour. They were transcribed in illuminated characters, and styled *Mudhahabât* or *Golden;* or they were attached to the Kaaba and honored with the title *Möallacât.* The SABÁA MOALLACÂT, or "Seven suspended Poems," still survive from a period anterior even to Mahomet, a wondrous specimen of artless eloquence. The beauty of the language, and wild richness of the imagery, are acknowledged even by the European reader; but the subject of the poet was limited, and the beaten track was seldom deviated from. The charms of his mistress, the envied spot marked by the still fresh traces of her encampment, the solitude of her deserted haunts, his own generosity and prowess, the unrivalled glory of his tribe, the noble qualities of his camel;—these were the themes which, with little variation of treatment, and without any imaginative contrivance of general plot or design, occupied the Arab muse;—and some of them only added fuel to the besetting vices of the people, vain-glory, envy, vindictiveness, and pride.

Origin of the *Sacrilegious War.*

At the fair of Ocâtz, a rivalrous spirit had been, about this period, engendered between the Coreish and the Bani Hawâzin, a numerous tribe of kindred descent, which dwelt (and still dwells) in the

country between Mecca and Tâif.* An arrogant poet, vaunting the superiority of his tribe, had been struck by an indignant Hawâzinite; a maid of Hawâzin descent rudely treated by some Coreishite youths; an importunate creditor insolently repulsed.† On each occasion the sword was unsheathed, blood began to flow, and the conflict would have become general unless the leaders had interfered to calm the excited people. Such was the origin of the FIJÂR, or Sacrilegious War, so called because it occurred within the sacred term, and was eventually carried into the sacred territory.

Precautions by which peace was for a time preserved.

These incidents suggested the expediency of requiring all who frequented the fair to surrender, while it lasted, their arms, and to deposit them with Abdallah ibn Jodâân, a Coreishite chief.‡ By this

* They sprang through Cays Aylân, from Modhar and Maadd, the ancestors of the Coreish. See Introduction, chap. iii. p. cxcv.

† The circumstances form a curious illustration of Arab manners. The Hawâzin creditor seated himself in a conspicuous place with a monkey by his side, and said, "*who will give me another such ape, and I will give him in exchange my claim on such* a one,"—naming his creditor with his full pedigree from Kinâna, an ancestor of the Coreish. This he kept continually vociferating to the intense annoyance of the Kinâna tribe, one of whom drew his sword and cut off the monkey's head. In an instant the Hawâzin and Kinâna tribes were embroiled in bitter strife. The poet mentioned in the text, and also the murderer Birrâdh who, as shown below, actually kindled the war, belonged to the Bani Kinâna. The war therefore embraced a wider range than the Coreishite family, who formed a portion only of the Kinâna tribe.

‡ He was descended from Taym, an uncle of Cassai. See chap. iv. of Introduction.

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precaution peace was preserved for several years, when a wanton murder supplied a more serious cause of offence.

Hostilities precipitated by a murder.

Nomân V. Prince of Hîra, despatched to the fair of Ocâtz a caravan richly laden with perfumes and musk. It proceeded under the escort of Orwâ, a warrior of the Bani Hawâzin. Birrâdh, a friend of the Coreish, jealous at being supplanted in the convoy of the merchandise, watched his opportunity, and falling upon Orwâ as he encamped by a fountain near Fadac,* slew him, and fled with the booty to conceal himself in Kheibar. On his way thither he met a Coreishite whom he charged to proceed with expedition to the fair then being held at Ocâtz, and communicate the intelligence to Harb (who was his confederate or *halîf*) and the other Coreishite chiefs.† The message was conveyed, and Abdallah ibn Jodâân, thus privately informed of the murder, immediately restored to all their arms, and feigning urgent business at Mecca at once departed with his whole tribe.‡ But the news of the murder began rapidly to spread at Ocâtz, and as the

* The spot was called Awâra, in the valley of Tayman, north of Medîna.

† The Coreshite messenger was a poet called Bishr.

‡ Harb is said to have urged Abdallah to give up only the Coreishite, and to withhold the Hawâzin arms; so that they might fall upon the latter unprepared. Abdallah rejected the proposal as perfidious. But it looks very like an Abasside tradition to vilify the Omeyads. Harb was the son of Omeya and father of Abu Sofiân.

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sun went down it reached the ears of Abu Berâ, Chief of the Hawâzin; who, forthwith perceiving the cause of the precipitate departure of the Coreish, rallied his people around him and proceeded in hot pursuit. The Coreish had already entered the sacred limits, and the Bani Hawâzin contented themselves with challenging their enemy to a rencounter at the same period of the following year. The challenge was accepted, and both parties prepared for the struggle. Several battles were fought with various success, and hostilities, more or less formal, were prolonged for four years, when Otba son of Rabia (the nephew of Harb,) proposed a truce. The dead were numbered up, and as twenty had been killed of the Hawâzin more than of the Coreish, the latter consented to pay the price of their blood, and for this purpose delivered hostages.*

A truce after four years fighting.

In some of these engagements, the whole of the Coreish and their allies were engaged. Each tribe was commanded by a Chief of its own; and Abdallah ibn Jodáân guided the general movements. The descendants of Abd Shams and Nowfal were headed by Harb, the son of Omeya, and took a distinguished part in the warfare. The children of Hâshim were present also, under the command of Zobeir, the eldest surviving son of Abd al Muttalib; but they occupied no prominent position.

The whole of the Coreish engaged in this struggle.

* One of the hostages was Abu Sofiân, the famous antagonist in after days of Mahomet.

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Part taken by Mahomet in the fighting.

In one of the battles Mahomet attended upon his uncles; but, though now near twenty years of age, he had not acquired the love of arms. According to some authorities, his efforts were confined to gathering up the arrows discharged by the enemy and handing them to his uncles. Others assign to him a somewhat more active share; but the sentence in which this is preserved does not betray much enthusiasm in the warfare;—"I remember," said the prophet, "being present with my uncles in the Sacrilegious War; I discharged arrows at the enemy, and I do not regret it."* Physical courage, indeed,

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* *Vide Kâtib al Wâckidi*, pp. 23½ and 24, where will also be found an account of the origin and progress of the war, with the names of the leaders of the several tribes. The statement in Hishâmi (p. 38) is briefer. M. C. de Perceval enters with great detail into the history of the war, devoting to it twenty-two pages. Vol. i. p. 296, *et. seq.* He makes the engagement in which Mahomet was present to be the first, that namely in which the Coreish retreated on receiving tidings of Orwâ's murder. But there does not appear to have been any *fighting* on this occasion; and the Kâtib al Wâckidi distinctly ascribes Mahomet's presence to an engagement in the *following* year. The Secretary mentions only one battle, in which the Coreish at first gave way, but were subsequently victorious. The engagement is spoken of (p. 24) as occurring in the month of Shawwâl, which *precedes* the sacred months; but this is said, probably, in order to shelter the youthful Mahomet from the sacrilegious charge of fighting within the sacred term. M. C. de Perceval, drawing upon the poetical remains in the Kitâb al Aghâni, details a succession of battles; he also makes Mahomet to have been but fourteen years of age on the occasion, and adds that had he been older he would have acted a more important part than picking up his uncle's arrows.

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and martial daring, are virtues which did not distinguish the prophet at any period of his career.

Probable influence upon Mahomet of attending the fair at Ocâtz,

The struggles for pre-eminence and the contests of eloquence, at the annual fair, possessed for the young Mahomet a more engrossing interest than the combat of arms. At these spectacles, while his patriotism was aroused, and desire after personal distinction stimulated by the surrounding atmosphere of rivalry, he had a rare opportunity for cultivating his fertile genius, and learning from the greatest masters and most perfect models, the art of poetry and the power of rhetoric. But another and a nobler lesson was taught in the concourse at Ocâtz. The Christianity, as well as the chivalry of Arabia, had there her representatives; and, if we may believe tradition, Mahomet while a boy heard Coss, the bishop of Najran, preach a purer creed than that of Mecca, in accents, pregnant with deep reason and fervid faith, which agitated and aroused his soul. And many at that fair, besides the venerable Coss, though

in acquiring the faculty of poetry and rhetoric;

and an acquaintance with Christians and Jews.

But the testimony of the Kâtib al Wâckidi, Hishâmi, and Tabari, (p. 77) is plainly and unanimously in favour of the age of *twenty* years: and the first distinctly states that he took an active part in the archery.

Among the chieftains in command of tribes, it is interesting to trace Khuweilid the father of Khadîja; Khattâb the father of Omar; Othmân ibn al Huweirith, and Zeib ibn Amr, two of the four "*Enquirers*" who will be noticed below; Al As ibn Wâil; Omeya ibn Khalaf; and other well known names.

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perhaps influenced by a less catholic spirit, and more by prejudice and superstition, yet professed to believe in the same Revelation from above, if they did not actually preach the same good tidings. There, too, were Jews, serious and earnest men, surpassing the Christians in number, and equally with them appealing to an inspired Book. The scene thus annually witnessed by Mahomet as he advanced into mature years, had, (we cannot doubt,) a deep influence upon him. May there not have been here the germ of his great catholic design;—of that Faith around which the tribes of all Arabia were to rally? At the fair, one religion clashed against another in apparently hopeless opposition; and yet amid the discord he might discern some common elements,—a book,—a name, to which all would reverently bow. With the Jews he was more familiar than the Christians, for as a child he had seen them at Medîna, had heard of their synagogue or place of worship, and had learned to respect them as men that feared God. They glanced bitterly at the Christians, and even when Coss addressed them in language which approved itself to the heart of Mahomet as truth, they scorned his words, and railed at the meek and lowly Jesus of whom he spoke. Not less disdainfully did the Christians regard the Jews. And both Jews and Christians spurned the Arab tribes as heathens exposed to the wrath of an offended Deity. Yet if the enquirer sought, by questioning the parties around him, to fathom the causes of this opposition,

Possible germ here of his great Catholic system.

he would find that, notwithstanding the mutual enmity of the Jews and Christians, there was a Revelation equally acknowledged by both to be divine; that both denounced idolatry as a damnable sin, and both professed to worship One only God; and (what would startle Mahomet and stir his inmost soul,) that both repeated with profound veneration a common Name,—the name of Abraham, the builder of the Meccan Temple, and author of the faith and rites observed there by every Arab tribe. What, if there were truth in all these systems;—divine TRUTH, dimly glimmering through human prejudice, malevolence, and superstition? Would not that be a glorious mission, to act the same part as this Christian bishop on a wider and yet more catholic stage, and, by removing the miserable partitions which hide and sever each nation and sect from its neighbour, to make way for the natural illumination of truth and love emanating from the Great Father of all! Visions and speculations such as these were no doubt raised in the mind of Mahomet by association with the Jews and Christians frequenting this great fair. Certainly the Prophet, late in life, referred with satisfaction to the memory of Coss the son of Sâida, as having preached there the *Hanefite*, or Catholic, Faith.*

* See p. lxvii. of the Introduction, chap. iii.; also *M. C. de Perceval*, vol. i. p. 159; and *Sprenger*, p. 35.

It is right to add that the only authentic tradition I have met with on the subject, does not prove that Mahomet *ever was an auditor* of

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The *Hilf al Fudhûl*, or league amongst the Coreish for protecting the oppressed.

A confederacy formed at Mecca, for the suppression of violence and injustice, aroused an enthusiasm in the mind of Mahomet which the martial exploits of the Sacrilegious War failed to kindle. It was called the "Oath of *Fudhûl*," and occurred immediately after the restoration of peace.* The offices of State, and with them the powers of government, had (as shown in the Introduction) become divided among the various Coreishite families. There was no one now to exercise an authority such as had been enjoyed by Cossai and Hâshim, or even by Abd al Muttalib. When any of the separate tribes neglected to punish in its members acts of oppression and wrong, no chief at Mecca was strong enough to stand up as the champion of the injured. Right was not enforced: wrong remained unpunished. Some

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Coss. It occurs at p. 61½ of *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, in the account of a deputation to the prophet at Medîna, from the Bani Bakr ibn Wâil. One of them addressed Mahomet, "Didst thou know Coss, the son of Sâida?" The Prophet replied;—"*He was not one of you; he was a man of the tribe of Iyâd, who professed the true faith in the days of ignorance, and he visited Ocâtz during the concourse of the people there, and addressed them in words which have been preserved from his lips.*" فقال لهرجل منهم هل تعرف قس ابن ساعده فقال رسول الله ليس هو منكم هذا رجل من اياد تحنف فى الجاهلية فوافى عكاظ و الناس مجتمعون فتكلمهم بكلمه الذى حفظ عنه

* The Kâtib al Wâckidi states that it occurred the month after the conclusion of the war, while Mahomet was yet but twenty years of age, (p. 24.)

glaring instances of this nature* suggested to the principal Coreishite families the expediency of binding themselves by an oath to secure justice to the helpless. The honor of originating this movement is ascribed to Zobeir, the oldest surviving son of Abd al Muttalib. The descendants of Hâshim, and the families sprung from Zohra and Taym,† assembled in the house of Abdallah son of Jodâân, who prepared for them a feast; and they swore "by the avenging Deity, that they would take the part of the oppressed, and see his claim fulfilled, so long as a drop of water remained in the ocean, or that they would satisfy it from their own resources."‡ The league was useful, both as a preventive against unjust aggression, and on some occasions as a means of enforcing restitution. "I would not," Mahomet used in after years to say, "exchange for the choicest camel in all Arabia the remembrance of being present at the Oath which we took in the house of Abdallah, when the Bani

* M. C. de Perceval gives two instances. The *first*, in which a stranger, even though under the protection of the Chief Abdallah ibn Jodâân, had his camels slaughtered and devoured before his eyes. The *second* relates to a man who having no patron or protector at Mecca, and being denied the price of goods he had sold, repaired to an eminence on the side of the hill Abu Cobeis, near where the Coreish used to assemble, enjoying the cool evening breeze, and loudly called for justice. Vol. i. p. 330.

† Zohra the brother, and Taym the uncle of Cossai.

‡ The expression in the last clause is not very clear. The words are:— و فى التاسى فى المعاش

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Hâshim, Bani Zohra, and Bani Taym, swore that they would stand by the oppressed."*

Mahomet's occupation as a shepherd.

The youth of Mahomet passed away without any other incidents of interest. At one period he was employed, like other lads, in tending the sheep and goats of the Meccans upon the neighbouring hills and valleys. He used when at Medîna, to refer to this employment, and to say that it comported with his prophetic office, even as it did with that of Moses and David. On one occasion, as some people passed by with the fruit of the wild shrub *Arak*, the prophet said to his companions,—"Pick me out the blackest of these berries, for they are sweet;—even such was I wont to gather when I fed the flocks of Mecca at Ajyâd. Verily there hath no prophet been raised up, who performed not the work of a Shepherd." The hire received for this duty would contribute towards the support of his needy uncle Abu Tâlib, and the occupation itself was congenial with his thoughtful and meditative

* *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 24. It is remarkable that only these three tribes are included in the league. To the Bani Zohra belonged Mahomet's mother; and his friend Abu Bakr to the Bani Taym. That the league was only a partial one is evident from its name; *fudhûl* "what is unnecessary or supererogatory." By this appellation it seems to have been called by the rest of the Coreish, who did not join it. For other, but less likely, derivations, see *M. C. de Perceval*, vol. i. p. 333; and *Weil*, p. 33. The former gives an instance in which the league was after the death of Mahomet appealed to by Hosein son of Ali, against Moâvia or his nephew.

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character.* While he watched the flocks through the hours of darkness, his attention would be riveted by the evidences of natural religion spread around: the twinkling stars and bright constellations gliding

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* See *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 23; *Tabari*, p. 63; *Sprenger*, p. 81; *Weil*, p. 33; *Mischât ul Masôbîh*, (Eng. trans.) vol. ii. pp. 51 and 520. In the last named work, the hire received by Mahomet is specified. In one tradition given by Wâckidi, Mahomet speaks thus.— وانا رعيتها لاهل مكة بالقراريط —. Some make the word Al Carârit here to be the name of a place; but it is more probable that Mahomet by it meant that he fed the flocks for *Kirats*, or small coins. *Weil.*

Sprenger says that this occupation, being regarded as humiliating for a man, proves Mahomet's "unfitness for the common duties of life," (p. 81). The duty, doubtless, was never regarded in Arabia as a very manly one; and, as Burkhardt shows, is now committed by the Bedouins to their unmarried girls. Yet in Mahomet's time, at least, it was evidently nothing unusual or humiliating for the boys of respectable citizens to be thus employed. We read of another Coreishite lad being engaged with Mahomet in tending the flocks. *Tabari*, p. 63. Omar used to be sent out by his father to feed his sheep and goats, and to bring in forage for his camels. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 231. So Abu Bakr, even after his elevation to the Caliphate, is said to have been in the habit not only of milking the goats of the people of the quarter of Medîna where he lived (at Sunh), but of taking them occasionally *out to pasture*. This may be an exaggeration, intended to magnify the simplicity of his life (as a lesson and example to future luxurious Caliphs); still the very existence of the tradition proves that the task was as little regarded in a dishonorable light at Medîna as at Mecca. Probably, it was less disliked by the people of the towns than by those of the desert.

The place Ajyâd is I suppose the rising ground to the south of Mecca, now called Jabal Jyâd, on the declivity of which the quarter *Haret Jyâd* is now built. *Burkhardt*, p. 115; *Ali Bey*, vol. ii. p. 119.

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Probable effect of the shepherd life upon his mind.

silently along the deep blue sky, would be charged to him with a special message; the loneliness of the desert would arm with a deeper conviction that speech which day everywhere utters unto day; while the still small voice, which by the attentive listener is never unheard, would swell into grander and more imperious tones when the tempest swept with its forked lightning and far rolling thunder along the vast solitudes of the Meccan mountains. Thus was cherished a deep and earnest faith in the Deity as an ever-present, all-directing Agent;—a faith which in after-days the prophet was wont to inforce from the stores of his well-furnished observation, by eloquent and heart-stirring appeals to the sublime operations of Nature, and the beneficent adaptations of Providence.

Reserved and temperate youth of Mahomet.

All the authorities agree in ascribing to the youth of Mahomet a correctness of deportment and purity of manners, rare among the people of Mecca. His modesty is said to have been miraculously preserved:—"I was engaged one night" (so runs a tradition from the Prophet) "feeding the flocks in company with a lad of the Coreish. And I said to him, if thou wilt look after my flock, I will go into Mecca and divert myself there, as youths are wont by night to divert themselves."* But no sooner

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* حتى ادجل مكه فاسمر بها كما يسمر الشباب

The story is told by Tabari, p. 68.

had he reached the precincts of the city, than a marriage feast engaged his attention, and he fell asleep. On another night, entering the town with the same intentions, he was arrested by heavenly strains of music, and, sitting down, he slept till morning. Thus he again escaped temptation;—"And after this," added Mahomet, "I no more sought after vice; even until I had attained unto the prophetic office." Making every allowance for the fond reverence which paved an easy way for the currency of such stories, it is quite in keeping with the character of Mahomet that he should have shrunk from the coarse and licentious practices of his youthful friends. Endowed with a refined mind and a delicate taste, reserved and meditative, he lived much within himself, and the ponderings of his heart supplied occupation for the leisure hours spent by men of a lower stamp in rude sports and riotous living. The fair character and honourable bearing of the unobtrusive youth won, if not the approbation, at least the respect, of his fellow citizens; and he received the title, by common consent, of AL AMÎN, "the Faithful."*

Abu Tâlib suggests to Mahomet a mercantile expedition, ætat 25.

Thus respected and honored, Mahomet lived a quiet and retired life in the bosom of the family of Abu Tâlib, who was prevented by his limited means from occupying a prominent position in

* *Hishâmi*, p. 38.

the society of Mecca. At last Abu Tâlib, finding his family increase faster than the ability to provide for them, bethought him of setting his nephew, now of a mature age, to earn a livelihood for himself. Mahomet was never covetous of wealth, or at any period of his career energetic in the pursuit of riches for their own sake. If left to himself, he would probably have preferred the quiet and repose of his present life, to the bustle and cares of a mercantile journey. He would not spontaneously have contemplated such an expedition. But when the proposal was made his generous soul at once felt the necessity of doing all that was possible to relieve his uncle, and he cheerfully responded to the call. The story is as follows.

Mahomet accompanies the Syrian caravan in charge of Khadija's venture.

When his nephew was now five-and-twenty years of age, Abu Tâlib addressed him in these words:—"I am as thou knowest, a man of small substance; and truly the times deal hardly with me. Now here is a caravan of thine own tribe about to start for Syria, and Khadîja daughter of Khuweilid needeth men of our tribe to send forth with her merchandise. If thou wert to offer thyself, she would readily accept thy services." Mahomet replied:—"Be it so, as thou hast said." Then Abu Tâlib went to Khadîja, and enquired whether she wished to hire his nephew, but he added;—"We hear that thou hast engaged such an one for two camels, and we should not be content that my nephew's hire were less than four." The matron

answered:—"Hadst thou askedst this thing for one of a distant or unfriendly tribe, I would have granted it; how much rather now that thou askest it for a near relative and friend!" So the matter was settled, and Mahomet prepared for the journey. When the caravan was about to set out, his uncle commended him to the men of the company. Meisara, a servant of Khadija, likewise travelled along with Mahomet in charge of her property.

reaches Bostra, and barters to advantage.

The caravan took the usual route to Syria, the same which Mahomet had traversed with his uncle thirteen years before. In due time they reached Bostra, a city on the road to Damascus, and about sixty miles to the east of the Jordan. The transactions of that busy mart, where the practised merchants of Syria sought to overreach the simple Arabs, were ill suited to the tastes and the habits of Mahomet; yet his natural sagacity and ready shrewdness carried him prosperously through the undertaking. He returned from the barter with the balance of exchange more than usually in his favour.*

* The usual profit was to double the value of the stock; so that in the case of Mahomet, who is said by some to have made *twice* the *usual* gain, the principal would be quadrupled. But Hishâmi says only that "he doubled the stock, or nearly so."

There is a tradition that a contention arose between Mahomet and one who wished to take his wares, but who doubting his word, desired him to swear by the two Meccan goddesses Lât and Ozza; which Mahomet refused to do. But this again is mentioned as one of the signs by which the monk knew that he was "the coming prophet," and seems of a piece with the other marvellous tales relating to the occasion. The same story of his refusing

Impressions regarding Christianity.

The reflective mind of Mahomet, who had now reached the mature but still inquisitive period of early manhood, received deep and abiding impressions from all that he saw and heard upon the journey and during his stay at Bostra. Though the story of his interview with Nestorius, (a monk who embraced him as "the coming prophet,") is to be rejected as a puerile fabrication,* yet we may be certain that Mahomet lost no opportunity of enquiring into the practices and tenets of the Syrian Christians or of conversing with the monks and clergy who fell in his way.†

He probably experienced kindness, and perhaps hospitality, from them; for in his Book he ever speaks of them with respect, and sometimes with praise.‡ But for their doctrines he had no sympathy.

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to swear by Lât and Ozza, is related of his *first* journey to Syria as a child.

* The ancient biographies have less of the marvellous in this journey than in the former; yet there is a sufficiency. Nestor, the monk, saw Mahomet sitting under a tree, below which none ever sat but a prophet: he immediately recognised him as such, and was confirmed by the further prophetical symptom of redness in the eyes. Meisara saw two angels, who regularly shaded him during the heat of the day; and so forth.

† Arabic was spoken by the subjects of the Ghassânide dynasty and there would be little difficulty found by Mahomet in effecting an interchange of ideas with those about him. Poets, merchants, and travellers from Medîna, used often at this period to be guests at the Ghassânide Court.

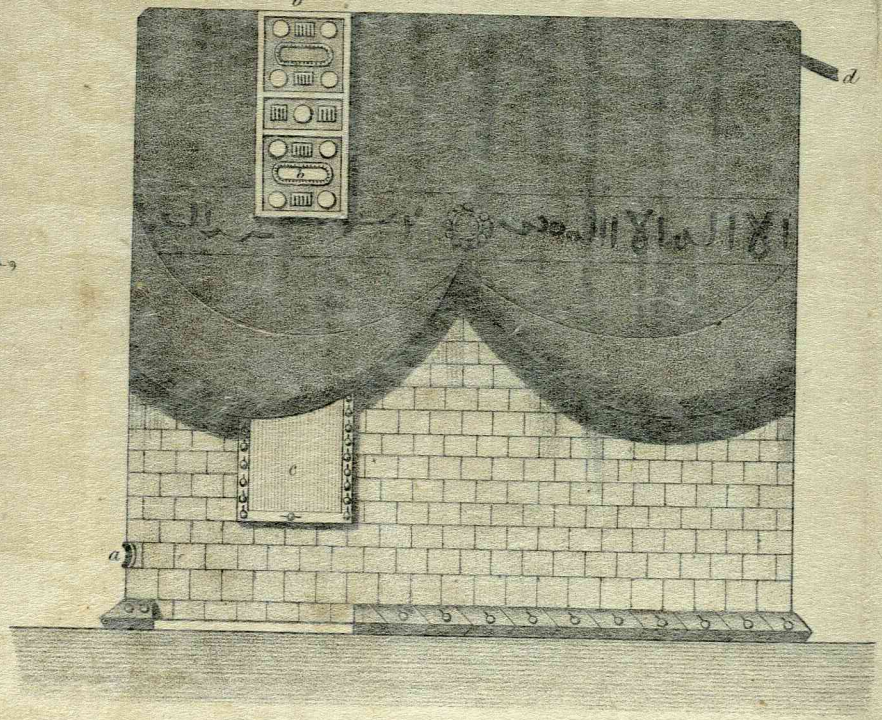
‡ Thus *Sura*, v. 91:—*Thou shalt surely find those amongst them who profess Christianity to be the most inclined to the believers.*

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VIEW OF THE KAABA,

as given by Ali Bey,

with the new Curtain partly drawn up.

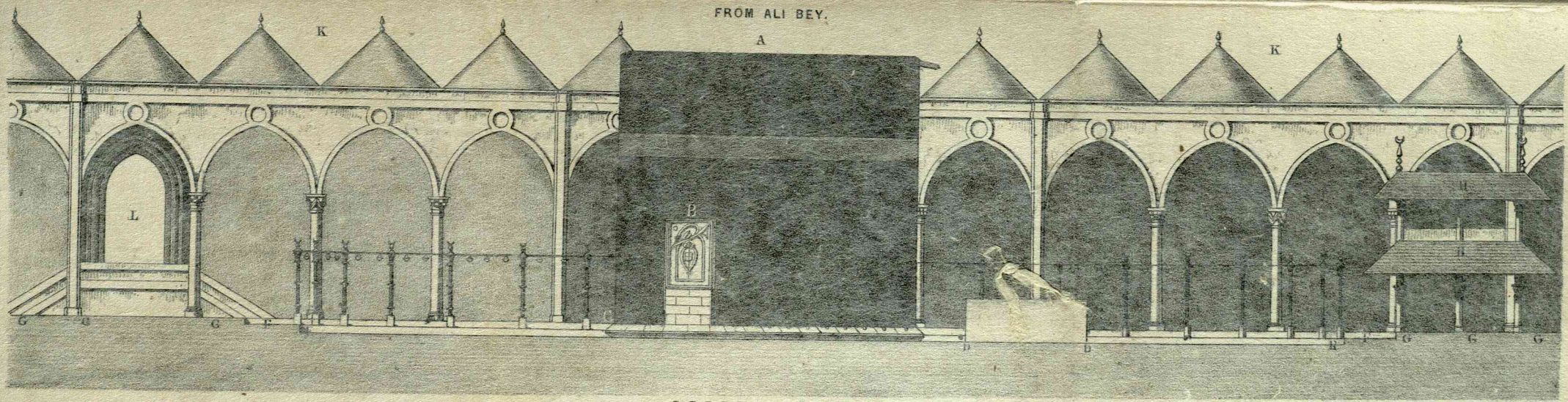


REFERENCES.

a. Black Stone.
b.b. Emblazoned curtain of the door hung for display from the roof.
c. Door.
d. Spout.

SKETCH OF THE KAABA,

FROM ALI BEY.



REFERENCES.

A ... *The Kaaba as fully robed.*
B ... *The Door.*
C ... *The Black Stone.*
DD ... *Al Hatim.*
EE ... *The depressed pavement upon which the Kaaba stands, and around which are metal pillars connected together and hung with Lamps.*
FF ... *The narrow inner step.*
GG ... *The outer pavement.*
NB. On the N.W. side this stone pavement is continued to the Piazza.
H ... *Macám Hanafy, supposed site of the Dar al Nadwa or Town Hall.*
KK ... *One side of the Piazza (the S.W.) as seen beyond the Kaaba.*
L ... *The Gate Bab Ibraham therein.*

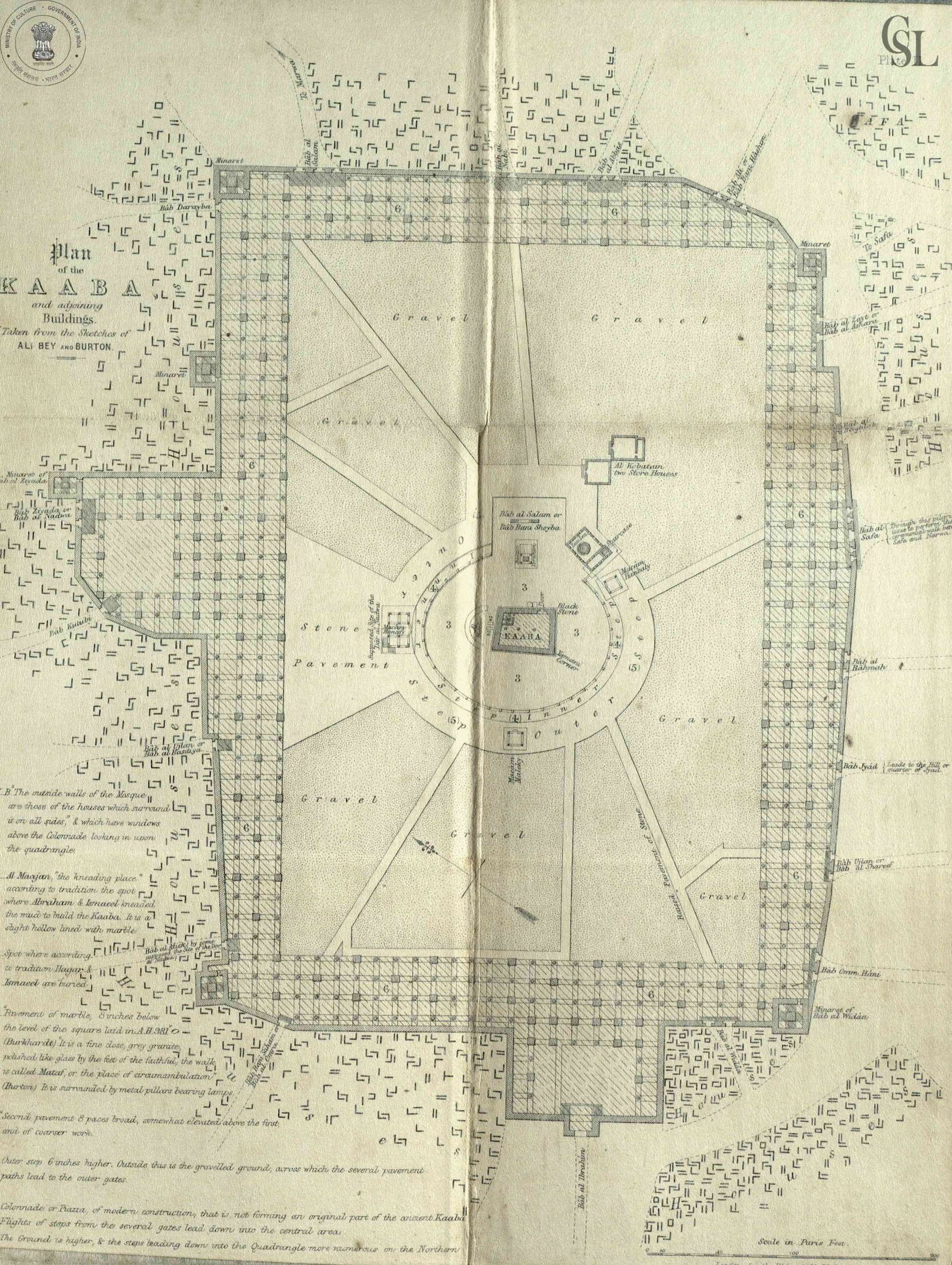
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Plan of the KAABA and adjoining Buildings.

Taken from the Sketches of ALI BEY AND BURTON.



"B" The outside walls of the Mosque are those of the houses which surround it on all sides," & which have windows above the Colonnade looking in upon the quadrangle.

Al Maajan, "the kneading place," according to tradition the spot where Abraham & Ismaeel kneaded the mud to build the Kaaba. It is a slight hollow lined with marble.

Spot where according to tradition Hagar & Ismaeel are buried.

"Pavement of marble, 8 inches below the level of the square laid in A.H. 981" (Burkhardt) "It is a fine close, grey granite, polished like glass by the feet of the faithful, the walk is called Mataf, or the place of circumambulation" (Burton) It is surrounded by metal pillars bearing lamps.

"Second pavement 8 paces broad, somewhat elevated above the first, and of coarser work.

Outer step 6 inches higher. Outside this is the gravelled ground, across which the several pavement paths lead to the outer gates.

Colonnade or Piazza, of modern construction, that is not forming an original part of the ancient Kaaba.

Flights of steps from the several gates lead down into the central area.

The Ground is higher, & the steps leading down into the Quadrangle more numerous on the Northern

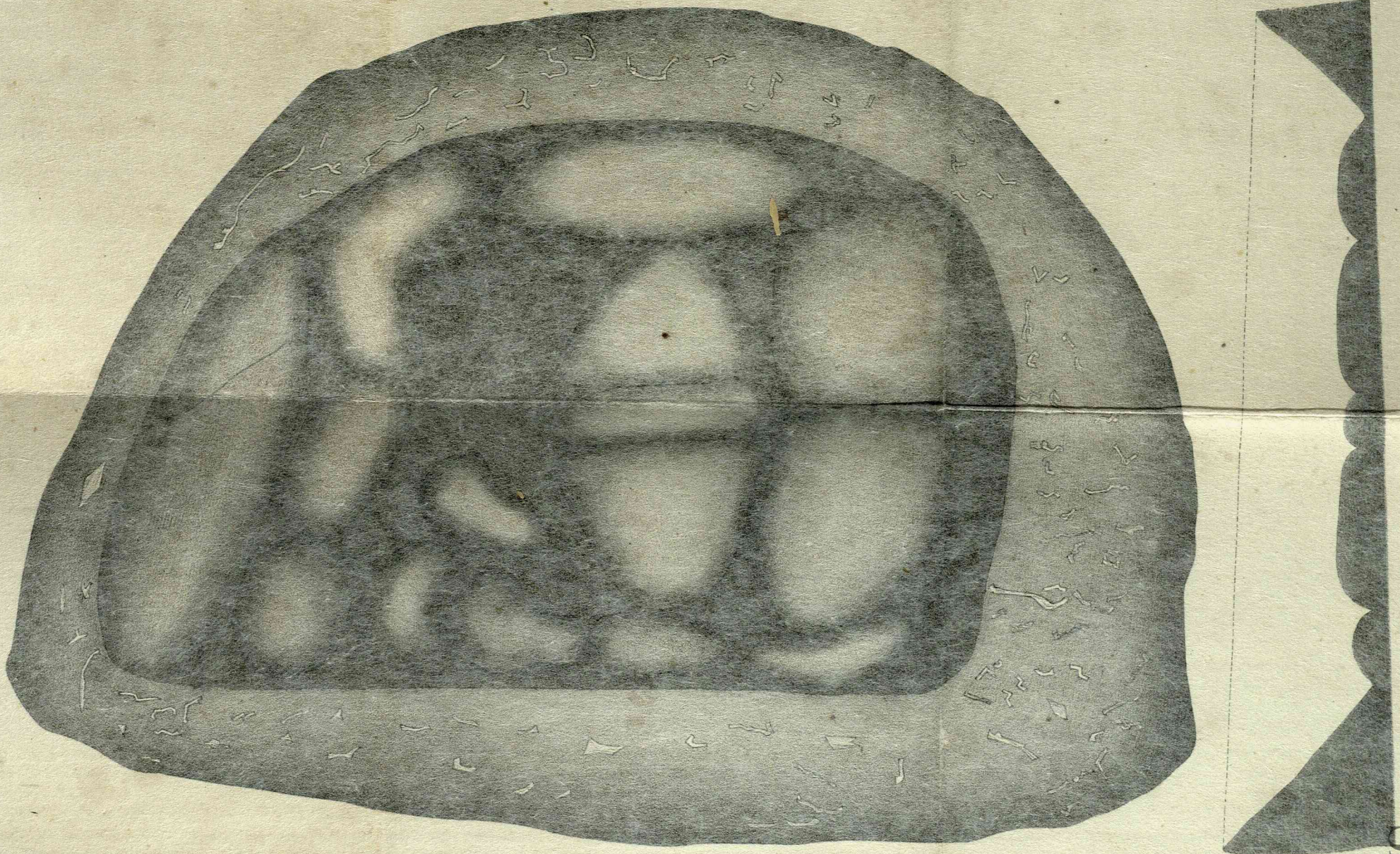
Plate IV.

FRONT AND SIDE VIEWS OF THE BLACK STONE.

(Built into the Eastern Corner of the KAABA, between four and five feet from the Ground.)

TAKEN FROM ALI BEY'S TRAVELS.

(Size the same as the Original.)



GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

The picture of Christianity in the Coran must have been, in some considerable degree, painted from the conceptions now formed. Had he witnessed a purer exhibition of its rites and doctrines, and seen more of its reforming and regenerating influences, we cannot doubt but that, in the sincerity of his early search after the truth, he would readily have embraced and faithfully adhered to the faith of Jesus. Lamentable, indeed, it is that the ecclesiastics and monks of Syria showed to the earnest enquirer so small a portion of the fair form of Christianity; and that little, how altered and distorted! Instead of the simple majesty of the Gospel,—as a revelation of God reconciling mankind to Himself through his Son,—the sacred dogma of the Trinity was forced upon the traveller with the misguided and offensive zeal of Eutychian and Jacobite partizanship, and the worship of Mary was exhibited in so gross a form as to leave the impression upon the mind of Mahomet that she was held to be a god, if not the third Person and the consort of the Deity.* It was by

Distorted view presented by the Syrian worship and teaching.

This cometh to pass because there are priests and monks among them, and because they are not elated with pride.

* *Sura*, v. 125,—*And when* GOD *shall say:—Oh Jesus son of Mary! Didst thou speak unto mankind, saying,—"Take me and my mother for two gods besides the Lord?"*

So far as I can judge from the Coran, Mahomet's knowledge of Christianity was derived from the orthodox party, who styled Mary "Mother of God." He may have heard of the Nestorian heresy, and it is possibly referred to among the "Sects" into which Jews

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such blasphemous extravagancies that Mahomet was repelled from the true doctrine of Jesus as "the SON OF GOD," and led to regard him only as "Jesus, son of Mary," the sole title by which he is spoken of in the Coran. We may well mourn that the misnamed Catholicism of the Empire so grievously misled the master mind of the age, and thus eventually the greater part of Asia and Africa.

Mahomet returns and reports in person to Khadija the successful result.

But to return. When Mahomet had disposed of the merchandise of his mistress, and, according to her command, purchased for her such things as she had need of, he retraced his steps in company with the caravan to his native valley.* The mildness of

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and Christians are said in the Coran to be divided. But, had he ever obtained a closer acquaintance with the Nestorian doctrine, at least in the earlier part of his career, it would (according to the analogy of his practice with respect to other subjects) have been more definitely mentioned in his revelation. The truth however (as will be shown in the concluding chapter) is that Mahomet's acquaintance with Christianity was at the best singularly dim and meagre.

* Though the *direct* route from Mecca to Bostra would run a great way east of the Mediterranean, it seems possible that either in this, or the former journey, Mahomet may have seen the Mediterranean Sea. Perhaps, on either occasion the Caravan may have visited Gaza (*Ghazza*) the favourite entrepot of the Meccan merchants. His references in the Coran to ships gliding majestically on the waters *like mountains*, appear to point to a larger class of vessels than he was likely to see on the Red Sea. The vivid pictures of sea-storms are among the finest sketches in the Coran, and evidently drawn from nature: the waves and tempests may have been witnessed from the Arabian shore, but the "mountain ships" more likely refer to the Mediterranean

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his manners and his kind attention had won the heart of Meisara and, as they drew near to Mecca, the grateful servant persuaded Mahomet to go forward from Marr al Tzahrân, and be himself the bearer to his mistress of the glad tidings of successful traffic. Khadîja, surrounded by her maids, was sitting upon the upper story of her house,* on the watch for the first glimpse of the caravan, when a camel was seen rapidly to advance from the expected quarter, and as it approached she perceived that Mahomet was the rider. He entered, recounted the prosperous issue of the adventure, and enumerated the various goods which agreeably to her commission he had purchased for her. She was delighted at all she heard; but there was a charm in the dark and pensive eye, in the noble features, and in the graceful form of her assiduous agent, as he stood before her, which pleased her even more than her good fortune. The comely widow was now forty years of age, she had been twice married, and had borne two sons and a daughter. Yet she cast a fond eye upon that thoughtful youth of five-and-twenty; nor when he departed, could she dismiss him from her thoughts.† She is charmed.

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* Her house is still shown in the *Zockâck al Hajar*, a little to the north-east of the Kaaba. It is called *Moulad Sitna Fâtima*; or the birthplace of Fâtima.

† The above account of the journey to Syria is chiefly from the Kâtib al Wâckidi. Tabari has a tradition that Mahomet traded on account of Khadîja, in company with another man, to Habasha, a market in the Tehâma. The place is erroneously

Description of Khadija.

Khadija was a Coreishite lady, distinguished by birth, as well as by fortune. Her father Khuweilid was the grandson of Asad,* and Asad was the grandson of Cussei. Khuweilid commanded in the Sacrilegious War a considerable section of the Coreish, and so did his nephew Othmân, son of Huweirith. Her substance, whether inherited or acquired through her former marriages, was very considerable; and, through hired agents, she had increased it largely by mercantile speculation. To the blessings of affluence, she added the more important endowments of discretion, virtue, and an affectionate heart; and, though now mellowed by a more than middle age, she retained a fair and attractive countenance. The chief men of the Coreish were not insensible to these charms, and many sought her in marriage; but choosing rather to live on in dignified and independent widowhood, she rejected all their offers. The tender emotions excited by the visit of Mahomet soon overpowered her resolution. The servant Meisara continued to sound in her not unwilling ears the praises of his fellow-traveller. At last her love became irresistible, and she resolved in a discreet and cautious

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named by Weil, *Hawasha*, (p. 34). This, however, is not well supported. Had there been really any such journey, we should have heard a great deal more about it, considering the mature period of Mahomet's life at which it is said to have occurred.

* Hence her family are styled the Bani Asad.

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way to make known her passion to its object. A sister (according to other accounts, a servant) was the agent deputed to sound his views. "What is it, O Mahomet," said this female, adroitly referring to the unusual circumstance of his being unmarried at so mature an age,—"what is it which hindereth thee from marriage?" "I have nothing" replied he, "in my hands wherewithal I might marry." "But if haply that difficulty were removed, and thou wert invited to espouse a beautiful and wealthy lady of noble birth, who would place thee in a position of affluence, wouldest thou not desire to have her?" "And who," said Mahomet, startled at the novel thought, "may that be?" "It is Khadîja." "But how can I attain unto her?" "Let that be my care," returned the female. The mind of Mahomet was at once made up: he answered, "I am ready." The female departed and told Khadîja.

She sends to negotiate a marriage between herself and Mahomet.

No sooner was she apprized of his willingness to marry her, than Khadîja despatched a messenger to Mahomet or his uncle, appointing a time when they should meet. Meanwhile, as she dreaded the refusal of her father, she provided for him a feast; and when he had well drunk and was merry, she slaughtered a cow, and casting over her father perfume of saffron or ambergris, dressed him in marriage raiment. While thus under the effects of wine, the old man united his daughter to Mahomet in the presence of his uncle Hamza. But when he recovered his senses, he began to look around him with wonder,

Mahomet is married to Khadîja.

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and to enquire what these symptoms of a nuptial feast, the slaughtered cow, the perfumes, and the marriage garment, should mean. So soon as he was made aware of all that had happened,—for they told him "The nuptial dress was put upon thee by Mahomet, thy son-in-law,"—he fell into a violent passion, and declared that he would never consent to give away to that insignificant youth, a daughter courted by all the great men of the Coreish. The party of Mahomet replied indignantly that the alliance had not originated in their wish, but was the act of no other than his own daughter. Weapons were drawn on both sides, and blood might have been shed, when the old man became pacified, and a reconciliation ensued.*

* It is not without much hesitation that I have followed Sprenger and Weil in adopting this version of the marriage. It has a strongly improbable air; but its very improbability gives ground for believing that it has not been fabricated. It is also highly disparaging to the position of Mahomet at a period of his life when it is the object of his followers to show that he was respected and honoured. Its credibility is therefore sustained by the Canon III. c laid down in chap. i. of the Introduction. There was no object in vilifying Khuweilid or the Bani Asad; and, even if it is possible to suppose the story fabricated by Mahomet's enemies before the conquest of Mecca, it would (if resting on no better foundation) have fallen out of currency afterwards. We seem therefore to have no option but to receive it as a fact, which later traditionists have endeavoured to discredit, under the impression that it was a foul spot on their Prophet's character that Khadîja, the pattern of wives, should have brought about her marriage with Mahomet by making her father druuk. See Canon II. L.

Wâckidi gives the narrative twice in a differing form, and from *different* traditions, (the variety of source thus giving it a wider

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Notwithstanding this stormy and inauspicious commencement, the connubial state proved, both to Mahomet and Khadîja, one of unusual tranquillity and happiness. Upon the former it conferred a faithful and affectionate companion, and, in spite of her age, a not unfruitful wife. Khadîja fully appreciated the noble mind and commanding talents, which a reserved and contemplative habit veiled from others, but could not conceal from her. She conducted as before the duties of her establishment, and left him to enjoy his leisure hours undisturbed and free from care. Her house* was thenceforward

The union fortunate and happy.

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and less doubtful foundation); but he adds that the whole story is a mistake, as Khuweilid, the father of Khadîja, had died previously, and even before the sacrilegious war. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 25. Yet we have seen above that his name is given as one of the *Commanders* in that war. Tabari quotes the tradition from Wâckidi, word for word, together with his refutation, (p. 67). Both add that not her *father*, but her *uncle*, Amr ibn Asad, betrothed her. Yet other traditions, containing no allusion to his drunkenness, speak of her *father* as having given her away (*Tabari*, p. 65); and Hishâmi's account, which is fused from a variety of traditions by Ibn Ishâc, while containing no reference to the drunken fray, states clearly that Khuweilid was the party who betrothed her. We are therefore driven to the conclusion that the tradition of Khuweilid's previous death has been invented, to throw discredit on the story of his drunkenness. Wine shops were common in Mecca before Islâm; but drunkenness, though occasionally mentioned, does not seem to have been a general or common failing.

Hishâmi adds to his statement that Mahomet gave his wife a marriage present of twenty young she-camels.

* For its position see above, p. 21, note *. Tabari says it was the one currently known in his time by Khadîja's name. It was

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his home, and her bosom the safe receptacle of those doubts and longings after spiritual light which now began to agitate his mind.

The children of Mahomet by Khadîja.

Within the next ten or fifteen years, Khadîja bore to Mahomet two sons and four daughters. The first-born was named Câsim; and after him, according to Arab custom, Mahomet received the appellation of AB UL CÂSIM, or "the father of Câsim." This son died at the age of two years. Meanwhile, his eldest daughter Zeinab was born; and after her, at intervals of one or two years, three other daughters, Rockeya, Fâtima, and Omm Kolthûm. Last of all was born his second son, who is variously named Abd Menâf, Abdallah, Tayib, and Tâhir; he, too, died in infancy. Salma, the maid of Safia, Mahomet's aunt, officiated as midwife on these occasions. Khadîja sacrificed at the birth of each boy two kids, and one at the birth of every girl. All her children she nursed herself.*

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purchased by Moâvia, and though made use of as a mosque, was preserved unaltered. A little closet at its door was shown in those days, little more than a yard square, in which Mahomet used to crouch down under a large stone, to protect himself against the missiles of Abu Lahab, and Adi the Thackifite. *Tabari*, p. 67.

* The Kâtib al Wâckidi states that there was an interval of *only one year* between each child, (p. 25). This, if taken with precision, would make the second son to be born when Mahomet was about thirty-one years of age, that is, about nine or ten years before his assumption of the prophetic office. But the expression is somewhat vague, and tradition says that the second son,

Many years after, Mahomet used to look back to this period of his life with fond remembrance. Indeed so much did he dwell upon the mutual love

Mutual love of Mahomet and Khadîja.

(Khadîja's last child) was born *after* the commencement of Islam, that is, after Mahomet had declared himself inspired, and was forty years of age. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 179. Sprenger does not believe this, and holds that the youngest child was born much earlier; *first* on account of the advanced age (fifty-three to fifty-five years) which Khadîja must have reached when Mahomet assumed the prophetic office; and *secondly*, because he considers the name of *Abd Menâf* (servant of the idol Menâf,) to have an idolatrous significance which Mahomet would not have tolerated at the late period referred to. He therefore believes that the Moslems, ashamed of the name, subsequently called the deceased child by other names, as Abdallah, Tayib, or Tâhir; and to take away the very suspicion of its ever having been called by an idolatrous name, assert that it was born *after* the commencement of Islam. *Sprenger*, p. 83. Sprenger is probably right as to the original name of the boy, and the cause of the substitution of others more palatable to Mahometan ideas. There is more cause for doubt as to the date of its birth. If an interval of about a year and a half elapsed between the birth of each child (the more likely as Khadîja herself nursed her children) the last would be born when Mahomet was about thirty-four or thirty-five, and Khadîja forty-nine or fifty years of age.

All authorities agree that Câsim was the eldest of the family, and Zeinab the next; but the succession of the other children is variously reported. The order followed in the text is that commonly received, and is given by the Kâtib al Wâckidi, (p. 25). But the Secretary in another place (p. 179) makes Abdallah follow Zeinab, and then Rockeya, Fâtima, and Omm Kolthûm. Tabari gives another, and Hishâmi a third, order.

Hishâmi also specifies two sons besides Câsim, viz. *Tayib* and *Tâhir*; both of whom, it is added, died before Islam, (p. 40). Tabari also speaks of them as *two*, (p. 65). But this, as Sprenger has shown (p. 83), is evidently a mistake. The first tradition in

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of Khadîja and himself, that the envious Ayesha declared herself more jealous of this rival whom she had never seen, than of all his other wives who contested with her the affection of the prophet.*

The person of Mahomet described.

No description of Mahomet at this period has been attempted by the traditionists. But from the copious accounts of his person in later life, an approximate outline may be traced of his appearance in the prime of manhood. Slightly above the middle size, his figure, though spare, was handsome and commanding, the chest broad and open, the bones and framework large, the joints well knit

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Wâckidi is capable of both constructions;—

ثم وُلد له فى الاسلام عبدالله فسمّى الطيب و الطاهر

i.e. "afterwards there was born unto him in Islam, Abdallah, called Tayib, *and Tâhir*." The tradition, in this shape, evidently gave rise to the error of supposing that Tâhir, one of the surnames of Abdallah, was a separate son. At p. 179 Wâckidi states the true case in unmistakeable language;— و عبدالله و هو الطيب

و هو الطاهر سمّى بذلك لانه ولد فى الاسلام *

i.e. "and Abdallah, *the same is Tayib, the same is Tâhir*, so called because he was born after the rise of Islam:"—the words being two adjectives signifying "Sweet" and "Pure."

M. C. de Perceval and Dr. Weil have both been misled here. The former (vol. i. p. 329,) mentions two sons, Tayib and Tâhir; the latter enumerates no fewer than six, mistaking *Tayib*, *Tâhir*, *Abd Menâf*, *Abdallah*, *Mutayib*, and *Mutahhir*,—(all appellations of one and the same son) for the names of as many different children. *Weil*, p. 39. "Mutayib" and "Mutahhir" are only different forms of the adjectives Tayib and Tâhir.

* *Mishcat*, vol. ii. p. 790.

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together.* His neck was long and finely moulded.† The head, unusually large, gave space for a broad and noble brow. The hair, thick, jet black, and slightly curling, fell down over his ears. The eyebrows were arched and joined.‡ The countenance thin, but ruddy. His large eyes, intensely black and piercing, received additional lustre from their long dark eye-lashes. The nose was high and slightly aquiline, but fine, and at the end attenuated. The teeth were far apart. A long black bushy beard, reaching to the breast, added manliness and presence. His expression was pensive and contemplative. The face beamed with intelligence, though something of the sensuous also might be there discerned. The skin of his body was clear and soft; the only hair that met the eye was a fine thin line which ran down from the neck toward the navel. His broad back leaned slightly forward as he walked; and his step was hasty, yet sharp and decided, like that of one rapidly descending a declivity.§

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* The hollows of his hands and feet were more than usually filled and level: which is a feature the Orientals regard with interest.

† "His neck rose like that of an antelope." *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 81½.

‡ But some say they were apart and not knit together. *Ibid.*

§ *Ibid.* p. 72, &c. This at Medîna degenerated into a stoop. Some say he walked like a man *ascending* a hill; others as if he was wrenching his foot from a stone. All these descriptions imply *decision* of step.

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His manner and conversation.

There was something unsettled in his blood-shot eye, which refused to rest upon its object. When he turned towards you, it was never partially but with the whole body. Taciturn and reserved,* he was yet in company distinguished by a graceful urbanity. His words were pregnant and laconic; but when it pleased him to unbend, his speech was often humourous, and sometimes pungent. At such seasons he entered with zest into the diversion of the moment, and now and then would laugh immoderately.† But in general he listened to the conversation rather than joined in it.

His emotions under control.

He was the subject of strong passions, but they were so absolutely under the controul of reason or of discretion, that they rarely appeared upon the surface. When much excited, the vein between his eyebrows would mantle, and violently swell across his ample forehead: yet he was cautious if not cunning, and in action fearful of personal danger.

Treatment of friends and enemies.

Mahomet was generous and considerate to his friends, and by his well-timed favour and attention

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* "Mahomet was sorrowful in temperament; continually meditating; he had no rest; he never spoke except from necessity; he used to be long silent; he opened and ended his speech from the corners of his mouth; he expressed himself in pregnant sentences, using neither too few nor too many words." *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 81½.

† When laughing immoderately, he showed his teeth and gums, and was sometimes so convulsed, that he had to hold his sides. *Ibid.*

knew how to rivet even the disaffected to his service. He regarded his enemies, so long as they continued their opposition, with a vindictive and unrelenting hatred; yet he was rarely known to pursue a foe after he had tendered a timely submission. His commanding mien inspired the stranger with an undefined and indescribable awe; but on closer intimacy, apprehension and fear gave place to confidence and love.*

Latent force of will.

Behind the quiet and unobtrusive exterior of Mahomet, lay hid a high resolve, a singleness and unity of purpose, a strength and fixedness of will, a sublime determination, destined to achieve the marvellous work of bowing towards himself the heart of all Arabia as the heart of one man. Khadîja was the first to perceive these noble and commanding qualities, and with a child-like confidence she surrendered to him her will and her faith.

Rebuilding of the Kaaba. A.D. 605. Ætat 35.

The first incident which interrupted the even tenor of the married life of Mahomet was the rebuilding of the Kaaba, when he was about five-and-thirty years of age. One of those violent floods which sometimes sweep down the valley of Minâ had shattered the holy house; it was filled with

* The personal description and traits of character have been chiefly gathered from the *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 79, *et. seq.*; and *Hishâmi*, p. 129. Tirmidzi also gives a full account of Mahomet's person.

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ominous rents, and they feared lest it should fall.* The treasures it contained were also insecure, owing to the absence of a roof; and a party of thieves had lately clambered over and robbed some of the precious relics. These were recovered, but it was resolved that a similar danger should for the future be avoided, by raising the walls to a greater height and covering them over. While the Coreish deliberated how this should be done, a Grecian ship was driven by stress of weather upon the shore of the Red Sea, near to Shúeiba, the ancient harbour of Mecca. The news of this misfortune reaching Mecca, Walîd son of Moghîra,† accompanied by a body of the Coreish, proceeded to the wreck, purchased the timber of the broken ship, and engaged her captain, a Greek by name Bacûm, skilled in architecture, to assist in the reconstruction of the Kaaba. The several tribes of the Coreish were divided into four bodies, and to each was assigned the charge of one side.‡ With such mysterious

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* Such torrents have frequently committed similar ravages. Thus, in 1627, A.D. the flood destroyed three sides of the sacred building. *Burkhardt*, p. 136. Omar built a mole across the valley a little above the town, to protect the Kaaba from these floods. The remains of the dyke, Burkhardt says, were visible till the fourteenth century. *Idem.* p. 126.

† He was descended from Makhzûm, a cousin of Cossai.

‡ The independent apportioning of the work shows how divided and isolated were the several branches of the Coreish at this time. One side was assigned to the Bani Abd Menâf (including descend-

reverence was the Kaaba regarded, that great apprehension was entertained lest the apparent sacrilege of dismantling the holy walls should expose even the pious restorers to divine wrath. At last Walîd seized a pickaxe, and invoking the Deity in a deprecatory prayer, detached and threw down a portion of the wall. All then retired and waited till the following morning, when, finding that no mischief had befallen the adventurous chief, they joined in the demolition. They continued to dig till they reached a hard foundation of green stones set close together like teeth, and resisting the stroke of the pickaxe.* From thence they began to build

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ants of Hâshim, Abd Shams, Naufal, and Abd al Muttalib,) and the Bani Zohra; a *second* to the Bani Asad and Abd al Dâr; a *third* to the Bani Taym and Makhzûm; and the *fourth* to the Bani Sahm, Jumh, Adi, and Amr ibn Lowey. There was, in fact, no acknowledged head, as the following incident proves.

* This green bed is called the "foundation of Abraham," and the tradition adds that when one struck his pick-axe into the stones the whole of Mecca shook. *Hishâmi*, p. 42; *Tabari*, p. 76.

It is also stated that an inscription was discovered beneath one of the corner foundations, written in Syriac, which no one could decypher, until a Jew made it out as follows:—"*I am God, the Lord of Becca* (an ancient name of Mecca); *I created it on the day on which I created the heavens and the earth, and formed the sun and the moon; and I have surrounded it with seven angels of the true faith; it shall not pass away until the two hills thereof pass away. Blessed be the inhabitants thereof in water and in milk.*" *Hishâmi*, p. 42. He adds, "There is a tradition that, about forty years before the mission of Mahomet, a stone was found in the Kaaba inscribed with these words;—"*He that soweth good, shall reap that which is to be envied; and he that soweth evil, shall reap remorse.*

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the wall. Stones of grey granite were selected or hewn from the neighbouring hills, and carried by the citizens upon their heads to the sacred enclosure.*

Mahomet, with the whole body of the Coreish, assisted in the work.† All proceeded harmoniously until the structure rose four or five feet above the surface. At that stage it became necessary to build the Black Stone into the eastern corner, with its surface so exposed as to be readily kissed by the

The Black Stone.

Ye do evil, and (expect to) obtain good: Ah! that would be to gather grapes of thorns." *Ibid.*

The first of these traditions is very remarkable. It quite accords with the theory developed in the second and third chapters of the Introduction, that some Abrahamic tribe, acquainted with Syriac, should have been at a remote period associated with the aboriginal Arabs in the building of the Kaaba, and should have left under its walls a Syriac inscription of the tenor referred to. At all events, the very existence of the tradition, whether true or not, shows the popular opinion on the subject, and the popular opinion was founded on *probable* legend.

* "The common stone of the Meccah mountains is a fine grey granite, quarried principally from a hill near the Bab al Shebayki, which furnished materials for the Kaabah." *Burton*, vol. iii. p. 150.

† A miraculous tale is here added. The people loosened their under garments, and cast them over their heads as a protection against the weight and roughness of the stones. Mahomet did the same; when a voice from heaven was heard warning him not to expose his person. Immediately he covered himself, and "after that day the nakedness of the prophet was never again seen by any human being." *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 27. One may conclude of what authority such stories are, when it is added that Hishâmi tells the same tale, in almost identical words, of Mahomet as a *child playing with other boys*, (p. 38).

pilgrims upon foot. This mysterious stone, we learn from modern travellers, is semi-circular, and measures about six inches in height, and eight in breadth; it is of a reddish-black colour, and bears marks in its undulating surface, notwithstanding the polish imparted by a myriad kisses, of volcanic origin.*

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* Ali Bey has given a plate with a front view and section of the stone. It possesses so peculiar an interest that a sketch has been given of it along with the plan of the Kaaba. The following is his description:—

"The Black Stone, Hhajera el Assouád, or Heavenly Stone, is raised forty-two inches above the surface," (*i.e.* the level of the ground,) "and is bordered all round with a large plate of silver, about a foot broad. The part of the stone that is not covered by the silver at the angle, is almost a semicircle, six inches in height by eight inches six lines in diameter at its base.

"This stone is a fragment of volcanic basalts, which is sprinkled throughout its circumference with small pointed coloured crystals, and varied with red felspath, upon a dark black ground like coal, except one of its protuberances, which is a little reddish. The continual kisses and touchings of the faithful have worn the surface uneven, so that it now has a muscular appearance. It has nearly fifteen muscles, and one deep hollow.

"Upon comparing the borders of the stone that are covered and secured by the silver with the uncovered part, I found the latter had lost nearly twelve lines of its thickness; from whence we may infer, that if the stone was smooth and even in the time of the prophet, (?) it has lost a line during each succeeding age," (*i.e.* century.) *Ali Bey*, vol. ii. p. 76.

"At the [north] east corner of the Kaaba, near the door, is the famous "Black Stone;" it forms a part of the sharp angle of the building, at four or five feet above the ground. It is an irregular oval, about seven inches in diameter, with an undulated surface, composed of about a dozen smaller stones of different sizes and

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Contention as to which tribe should deposit it in its place.

The virtue of the whole building depending upon this little stone, each family of the Coreish

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shapes, well joined together with a small quantity of cement, and perfectly smoothed: it looks as if the whole had been broken into many pieces by a violent blow, and then united again. It is very difficult to determine accurately the quality of this stone, which has been worn to its present surface by the millions of touches and kisses it has received. It appears to me like a lava, containing several small extraneous particles, of a whitish and a yellowish substance. Its colour is now a deep reddish brown, approaching to black; it is surrounded on all sides by a border, composed of a substance which I took to be a close cement of pitch and gravel, of a similar, but not quite the same brownish colour. This border serves to support its detached pieces; it is two or three inches in breadth, and rises a little above the surface of the stone. Both the border and the stone itself are encircled by a silver band, broader below than above and on the two sides, with a considerable swelling below, as if a part of the stone were hidden under it. The lower part of the border is studded with silver nails.

"In the south [east] corner of the Kaaba, or as the Arabs call it, Roken el Yamâny, there is another stone, about five feet from the ground; it is one foot and a half in length, and two inches in breadth, placed upright, and of the common Mecca stone. This the people, walking round the Kaaba, touch only with the right hand; they do not kiss it." *Burkhardt*, pp. 137-138.

The last-mentioned stone, the *Rukn Yamani*, so called from its southern aspect towards Yemen, is frequently mentioned in the annals of Mahomet, but was never regarded with the same reverence as the Black Stone.

The Black Stone was carried off by the sacrilegious Carmats, and retained by them at Hajar, in the east of Arabia, from A.H. 317 to 339, and then restored. *Weil's Caliphs*, vol. ii. p. 612; *Burkhardt*, p. 167. It was struck with a club by an emissary of the Egyptian fanatic Hakim, A.H. 413; after which the chips and dust were carefully restored, and the fractures cemented. *Burkhardt, ibid.*

Burton, who carefully surveyed the stone, states that the height

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began to advance pretensions to the exclusive honour of placing it in its future receptacle. The contention became hot, and it was feared that fighting and bloodshed would ensue. For four or five days the building was suspended. At last the Coreish again assembled on the spot amicably to decide the difficulty. Then Abu Omeya,* the oldest citizen, arose and said, "O Coreish, hearken unto me! My advice is that the man who chances first to enter in at this gate of the Bani Sheyba, he shall be chosen to decide the difference amongst you, or himself to place the Stone."† The proposal was

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from the ground, according to his measurement, is four feet nine inches. Vol. iii. 160.

He adds that he and his party "monopolized the use of it for at least ten minutes. Whilst kissing it and rubbing hands and forehead upon it, I narrowly observed it, and came away persuaded that it is a big aërolite." *Ibid.* p. 210.

And again:—"The colour appeared to me black and metallic, and the centre of the stone was sunk about two inches below the metal circle. Round the sides was a reddish-brown cement almost level with the metal, and sloping down to the middle of the stone." *Ibid.* p. 161, note. "The band," he adds, "is now a massive arch of gold or silver gilt. I found the aperture in which the stone is, one span and three fingers broad." *Ibid.* p. 162, note.

* *Hishâmi*, p. 43; *Tabari*, p. 76. He was of the Bani Makhzûm, and brother of Walîd, father of the famous Khâlid.

† The Kâtib al Wâckidi says "*to place the stone*;" Hishâmi and Tabari "to decide the dispute between them." The gate is called "that of the Bani Sheyba," by the Secretary (p. 27); probably because it was built by Abd al Muttalib (*Sheyba* al Hamd). *Burkhardt*, p. 152, quotes Azraki and Colobi to the effect that the Bâb al Salam is the modern name of the Bâb bani

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confirmed by acclamation, and they awaited the issue. Mahomet, who happened to be absent on the occasion, was immediately observed approaching, and he was the first to enter the gate. They exclaimed, "Here comes the Faithful arbiter (*al Amîn*); we are content to abide by whatever he may decide!" Calm and self-possessed, Mahomet received the commission, and with his usual sagacity at once resolved upon an expedient which should conciliate all. Taking off his mantle and spreading it upon the ground, he placed the stone thereon, and said, "Now let one from each of your four divisions come forward, and raise a corner of this mantle." Four chiefs approached, and seizing the corners simultaneously lifted the stone. When it had reached the proper height Mahomet,* with

Mahomet is chosen arbiter. His decision.

Sheyba. There are, however, two places called by that name;—one a grand entrance in the piazza, the other an isolated archway, about seventy feet on the north-east side of the Kaaba, and a little beyond the Macâm Ibrahîm. The latter is most probably the gate intended, as the piazza is entirely modern; and it is not unlikely that the ancient limits of the sacred yard were marked by some sort of wall or enclosure, of which this was one of the original gates or entrances. A court-yard measuring seventy or eighty feet from the Kaaba would take in all the objects of sacred interest immediately around it.

For the Bâb al Salam see *Burkhardt*, p. 146; *Burton*, vol. ii. p. 174. "The Bab al Salam or Bab Beni Shaybah, resembles in its isolation a triumphal arch, and is built of cut stone." It is no doubt a modern reproduction of the ancient doorway. See also *Ali Bey*, vol. ii. p. 83.

* Wâckidi adds a foolish legend, that a man from Najd offered Mahomet a stone to fix the corner-stone with; but that Abbâs

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his own hand, guided it to its place. The decision raised the character of Mahomet for wisdom and judgment; while the singular and apparently providential call would not pass unnoticed by Mahomet himself. Religious awe not unfrequently with him degenerated into superstition; and there was here a mysterious singling out of himself to be a judge among his fellows in a sacred question, which may well have wrought upon a less imaginative and enthusiastic spirit that that of Mahomet, and prompted the idea that he might yet be chosen of God to be the prophet of his people.

The Kaaba finished.

After the stone had been thus deposited in its proper place, the Coreish built on without interruption; and when the wall had risen to a considerable height they roofed it in with fifteen rafters resting upon six central pillars. A covering of cloth was, according to ancient custom, thrown over the edifice, and hung down like a curtain on every side.*

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interfered, and himself presented Mahomet with a stone for that purpose. The man of Najd was incensed, and Mahomet explained to him that only a Coreishite could have any concern whatever in the building of the house. The Najdite then became furious, and abused the Coreishites for choosing so young and insignificant a fellow as Mahomet for the office. It then turns out that this stranger from Najd was none other than *Iblis*, the devil himself!

We again find this legend of the devil in the shape of an old man from Najd, appearing at the council of the Coreish assembled many years afterwards to condemn Mahomet to death.

* The custom of veiling the Kaaba is of extremely remote date. The legend that one of the Tobbas of Yemen, on embracing

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The Kaaba thus rebuilt was surrounded by a small enclosure probably of not more than fifty yards in diameter. To the west* stood the Hall of Council, with its door towards the Kaaba.† On the east

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Judaism was the first to do so, in the beginning of the third century, is probably apocryphal. See *Introduction*, chap. iii. p. clvii. There is however no other tradition of the origin, though the curtain is referred to in traditions of the time of Mahomet.

Burton has an interesting resumé of the traditions regarding the covering. Vol. iii. p. 295-300.

Originally, it is supposed, the cloth covered the whole building including the top. Before a roof was made by the Coreish it would constitute the only protection from the weather. And this may have been its first object. The roof is now uncovered, the curtain being attached only to the walls.

The curtain was at first furnished by subscription, till Mughîra offered to supply it every alternate year. In the time of Mahomet it was of Yemen cloth. Omar renewed it yearly of Egyptian linen. Various materials, as striped Yemen stuff, red brocade, black silk, have been at different times used; and the covering has been changed as often as six times a year. To supply it came to be regarded a sign of sovereignty.

The covering is now worked at Cairo, and renewed yearly at the season of pilgrimage. It "is a coarse tissue of silk and cotton mixed." A band of two feet, embroidered with texts, is inserted a third from the top. Burton describes the new covering thus:—"It was of a brilliant black, and the Hizam—the zone or golden band running round the upper portion of the building—as well as the Burka (face veil) were of dazzling brightness." The Burka is "the gold embroidered curtain covering the Kaabah door." Vol. iii. p. 295.

* Or north-west.

† *Sprenger*, p. 24, note 4. Burkhardt also shows that it stood near the present "station" of the Hanefites, which lies on the west side. This and the gate of the Bani Sheyba, were probably the limits of the holy yard, and hence we may assume the enclosure

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was the gateway of the Bani Sheiba, close by the sacred well of Zemzem. At a respectful distance around were built the houses of the Coreish. The great idol Hobal was placed in the centre of the holy house; and outside were ranged various other images.* The door for entering the Kaaba was then, as it is now, near to the Black Stone in the eastern side, and several feet above the ground; a fact attributed by Mahomet to the pride of the Coreish, and a desire to retain in their own hands the power of admission. The building, though now substantial and secure, occupied somewhat less space than its dilapidated and roofless predecessor. The excluded area, called the *Hejer*

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in the days of Mahomet to have been of the dimensions given in the text.

Burton writes:—"Close to the north-west angle of the cloister (piazza of the Kaaba) is the Bab el Nadwah, anciently called Bab el Umrah, and now Bab el Atik, the Old Gate. Near this place, and opening into the Kaabah, stood the town Hal, Dar el Nadwah, built by Kusay." He adds that many authorities place this building on the site of the "station" of the Hanefites. Vol. iii. p. 181. Both traditions may be correct. The Town Hall, built close to the station of the Hanefites, may have had a gate near the site of the Bab el Nadwah.

* We have no authentic information as to the number of these idols. The popular tradition (*Burkhardt*, p. 164), that there were 360, or one for every day in the year, is not founded upon any careful authority. Lât and Ozza were no doubt pre-eminent. When Mahomet came as a conqueror to Mecca all the idols were destroyed, or rather (as the legend has it) each fell prostrate as he pointed at it. That the image or picture of Jesus and Mary had a place among the other idols seems apocryphal.

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or Hatîm, lay to the north-west, and is still without the sacred walls.*

* The sill of the door is now about seven feet above the level of the ground, and a moveable wooden staircase is used for ascending. It is six feet from the corner of the Black Stone. *Burkhardt*, p. 157; *Ali Bey*, vol. ii. p. 75; *Burton*, vol. iii. p. 156.

The pavement surrounding the Kaaba is eight inches lower than the rest of the square. *Burkhardt*, p. 142. Ali Bey affirms that the square itself is several feet lower than the surrounding streets, as you have to descend by steps into it. Hence he concludes that the floor of the Kaaba (*i.e.* the sill of its door), is the *original* level of the soil and of the building, the earth having been subsequently hollowed out. But this is not consistent with the fact that the door of the Kaaba was, even in Mahomet's time, when there could have been little need for excavation, about as high, probably, as it now is. The following tradition is related from Ayesha on the authority of Wâckidi. "The Prophet said:—*Verily they have drawn back the foundations of the Kaaba from their original limit; and if it were not that the inhabitants are fresh from idolatry, I would have restored to the building that which was excluded from the area thereof. But in case the people may again after my time need to renew the structure, come, and I will show thee what was left out.* So he showed a space in the *Hijr* of about seven yards. Then he proceeded:—

"*And I would have made in it two doors level with the ground, one towards the east, the other towards the west. Dost thou know why this people* raised *the door? It was out of haughtiness, that no one might enter thereat but he whom they chose; and any man they desired not to enter they suffered to come up to the door, and then thrust him back, so that he fell.*" It is added on other authority that the Coreish used to open the Kaaba on Mondays and Thursdays, and take off their shoes out of reverence for the holy place, when they entered; and that those who were thrust back from the door were sometimes killed by the fall. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 27½. When the Kaaba was reconstructed by Ibn Zobeir, A.H. 64, two doors are said to have been opened level with the ground. *Burkhardt*, pp. 137-165. But if so, the ancient form and proportions must subsequently have been

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The circumstances which gave occasion for the decision of Mahomet are strikingly illustrative of

Absence at Mecca of any paramount authority.

reverted to. Ali Bey thought that he perceived marks of a second door opposite, and similar to the present one; Burton also says,—"inside its place can still be traced."

Burton attributes the depression of the square to another cause. It "manifestly arises from the level of the town having been raised, like Rome, by successive layers of ruins; the most populous and substantial quarters (as the Shamiyah to the north) would, we might expect, be the highest, and this is actually the case," iii. 157. Rather, we might expect it because the fall of the valley is from north to south. The theory is hardly tenable.

The space at present called the *Hijr* or *Macâm Ismaîl*, lies to the north-west of he Kaaba, about the distance pointed out by Mahomet as the limit of the old building. It is now marked by a semi-circular parapet of white marble, five feet high, facing the Kaaba; the intervening spot being termed *Al Hatîm*. *Burkhardt*, p. 139. When Ibn Zobeir rebuilt the Kaaba on an enlarged scale, this is believed to have been enclosed; but it was again excluded by Hajâj ibn Yusuf. *Burkhardt*, p. 139. The space is still regarded as equally holy with the Kaaba itself.

Both Othmân and Ibn Zobeir enlarged the square by purchasing and removing the adjoining houses of the Coreish, and they enclosed it by a wall. Various similar changes and improvements were made by successive Caliphs till, in the third century of the Hegira, the Quadrangle with its imposing Colonnade, assumed the present dimensions. *Burkhardt*, p. 162, *et. seq.*

The Kaaba, as it now stands, is an irregular cube, the sides of which vary from forty to fifty feet in length. *Burton*, vol. iii. p. 154. The quadrangle corresponds loosely with the direction of its walls. Some say that the name of *Kaaba* was given after reconstruction of the temple by Ibn Zobeir; but it is so constantly referred to by that name in the most ancient traditions, that the appellation cannot possibly be modern. The Kaaba is more probably the ancient idolatrous name, while Beit-ullah, *The house of God*, is the more modern title harmonising with Jewish or Abrahamic expression.

the entire absence of any paramount authority in Mecca, and of the number of persons among whom the power of government was at this time divided. Each main branch of the Coreishite stock was independent of every other; and the offices of State and Religion created by Cossai were insufficient to secure a universal influence, because distribution among hostile families had neutralized their potency. It was a period in which the commanding abilities of a Cossai might have again dispensed with the prestige of place and birth, and asserted dominion by strength of will and inflexibility of purpose. But no such one appeared, and the divided aristocracy of Mecca moved onward with a feeble and distracted step.

Othmân ibn Huweirith attempts, under the influence of the Grecian Emperor, to sieze the Government.

A curious story is related of an attempt made about this period to gain the rule at Mecca. The aspirant was Othmân, son of Huweirith, a first cousin of Khadîja's father. He was dissatisfied, as the legend goes, with the idolatrous system of Mecca, and travelled to the Court of the Grecian Emperor, where he was honourably entertained, and admitted to Christian baptism. He returned to Mecca, and on the strength of an imperial grant, real or pretended, laid claim to the government of the city. But his claim was rejected, and he fled to Syria, where he found a refuge with the Ghassânide princes. Othmân revenged his expulsion by using his influence at the Court of Ghassân, for the

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imprisonment of the Coreishite merchants who chanced to be on the spot. But emissaries from Mecca by the aid of rich gifts, counteracted his authority with the Prince, and at last procured his death.*

Commerce flourishes at Mecca.

Notwithstanding the absence of a strong government, Mecca continued to flourish under the generally harmonious combination of the several independent phylarchies. Commerce was prosecuted towards Syria and Irâc with greater vigour than ever. About the year 606 A.D. we read of a mercantile expedition under Abu Sofiân, which for the first time penetrated to the capital of Persia, and reached even the presence of the Chosroes.†

Domestic life of Mahomet.

I proceed to notice some particulars of the domestic life of Mahomet.

Marriage of his three eldest daughters.

The sister of Khadîja was married to Rabî, a descendant of Abd Shams,‡ and had borne him a son called Abul As. The son had by this time grown up, and was respected in Mecca for his uprightness and mercantile success. Khadîja loved her nephew, and looked upon him as her own son. She prevailed upon Mahomet to join him in

* He died by poison. The story is not strongly attested, considering the lateness of the incidents related. See *Sprenger*, p. 34; *M. C. de Perceval*, p. 335; *Hishâmi*, p. 56.

† *M. C. de Perceval*, vol. i. p. 242.

‡ He was not however of the Omeyad line, but descended through Abd al Ozza, a brother of Omeya. *M. C. de Perceval*, vol. iii. p. 76.

marriage with their eldest daughter Zeinab, who had but just reached the age of womanhood. The union is proved by its subsequent history to have been one of real affection, though during the troubled rise of Islam it was chequered by a temporary severance, and by several romantic incidents.* Somewhat later the two younger daughters, Ruckeya and Omm Kolthûm, were given in marriage to Otba and Oteiba, both sons of Abu Lahab, the uncle of Mahomet.† Fâtima, the youngest, was yet a child.

Adopts his nephew Ali.

Shortly after the rebuilding of the Kaaba, Mahomet comforted himself for the loss of his son Câsim‡ by adopting Ali, the little son of his friend and former guardian Abu Tâlib. The circumstance is thus described.

It chanced that a season of severe scarcity fell upon the Coreish; and Abu Tâlib, still poor, was put to great shifts for the support of his numerous family. His difficulties were not unperceived by Mahomet, who, prompted by his usual kindness and consideration, repaired to his rich uncle Abbas, and said, "Oh Abbâs! thy brother Abu Tâlib hath a burdensome family, and thou seest what straits all

* *Hishâmi*, p. 234. These will be related below.

† *Hishâmi* as above; *Sprenger*, p. 83; *Weil*, p. 39.

‡ Possibly for that of his second son, Abd Menâf (or Abdallah), also; for we have seen above that the dates of his birth and death are uncertain, and may have happened earlier than we have supposed.

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men are brought to. Let us go to him, and relieve him somewhat of the care of his children. I will take one son. Do thou take another. And we shall support them." Abbâs consenting, they proposed the thing to Abu Tâlib; and he replied, "Leave me Ackil and Tâlib;* and do ye with the others as it pleaseth you." So Mahomet took Ali, and Abbâs took Jáfar. Ali, at this time probably not above five or six years of age, remained ever after with Mahomet, and they exhibited towards each other the mutual attachment of parent and child.†

Zeid, son of Hâritha, a Christian slave,

The heart of Mahomet was inclined to ardent and lasting friendships. About the period of Ali's adoption he received into his close intimacy another person unconnected with him by family ties, but of more equal age. This was Zeid, the son of Hâritha. As he is frequently alluded to in the coming history, and by his constant society must have influenced to

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* Some traditions say only Ackîl. The subsequent history of Tâlib is not clear or satisfactory. It is said that he was obliged against his will to fight on the side of the idolatrous Meccans at Badr, and that he was never heard of after.

† Ali was born about the beginning of the seventh century. M. C. de Perceval fixes the year of his birth in 602 A.D., which would make him fifty-nine or sixty when he died in 661. But tradition says that he died aged sixty-three. That, however, is the pattern age, which (having been Mahomet's) tradition is inclined to give, wherever possible, to its heroes. Supposing sixty-three to have been his real age, and making allowance for the lunar year, his birth would date in 600 or 601 A.D.

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some extent the course of Mahomet, it is important to trace his previous life. The father of Zeid was of the Bani Odzra, a Codhâite tribe collateral with the Bani Kalb,* and occupying the region south of Syria. His mother belonged to the Bani Mán, a division of the great Tai family.† While she was proceeding with the child on a journey to her home, the company was waylaid by a band of Arab marauders. Zeid was carried away captive, and sold into slavery. He afterwards fell into the hands of Hakim, grandson of Khuweilid, who presented him to his aunt Khadîja shortly after her marriage with Mahomet. He was then above twenty years of age; and is described as small in stature, and dark in complexion, with a short and depressed nose. He was nevertheless an active and useful servant;‡ and Mahomet soon conceived a strong affection for him. Khadîja to gratify her husband made him a present of the slave.

is also adopted by Mahomet.

A party of the Bani Kalb, on a pilgrimage to Mecca, recognized the youth, and communicated the tidings of his welfare to his disconsolate father,§

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* See *Introduction*, chap. iii. pp. cxlix. and cci. It was the same tribe which a couple of centuries before had assisted Cossai in his *coup d'état*.

† See in the same chap. p. ccxxviii.

‡ *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 186½; *Sprenger*, p. 160.

§ See the affecting verses his father is said to have recited when wandering in search of him. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 186; *Weil*, p. 325.

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who immediately set out to fetch him home. Arrived at Mecca, Hâritha offered a large payment for the ransom of his son. Mahomet summoned Zeid and left it in his option to go or to stay. He chose to stay. "I will not leave thee," he said, "thou art in the place to me of father and of mother." Delighted by his faithfulness, Mahomet took him straightway to the Black stone of the Kaaba, and said, "Bear testimony, all ye that are present! Zeid is my son. I shall be his heir, and he shall be mine." His father, contented with the declaration, returned home rejoicing; and the-freed man was thenceforward called "Zeid ibn Mohammad," *Zeid, the son of Mahomet.* At Mahomet's desire he married his old attendant, Omm Ayman. Though nearly double his age, she bore him a son called Usâma, who was the leader in the expedition to Syria at the time of Mahomet's fatal illness.*

* There is difficulty and discrepancy about the age of Zeid. Some traditions say that he was a mere child when received by Mahomet; but this is incompatible with his having shortly after married Omm Ayman. Sprenger (as it appears to me on insufficient grounds), attributes these traditions to a fear on the part of the Moslem historians that Mahomet might be suspected of gaining Christian knowledge from Zeid; and hence the traditions represented him as too young for that purpose (p. 161). Others say he was ten years younger than Mahomet; which is more likely. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 186½. But the most probable tradition is that which represents him as fifty-five, when killed at the battle of Mûta, A.H. 8, or 629 A.D. This would make him six years younger than Mahomet, or somewhat above twenty, when he came into his possession. The difference of age between

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Christian influence of Zeid;

Christianity prevailed in the tribes from which, both on the father's and the mother's side, Zeid sprang;* and though severed from his home at too early an age for any extensive or thorough knowledge of its doctrines, yet he probably carried with him some impression of the teaching, and some fragments of the facts or legends, of Christianity. These would form subjects of conversation between the youth and his adoptive father, whose mind was now feeling in all directions after religious truth. Among the relatives, too, of Khadîja, there were persons who possessed a knowledge of Christianity, and followed perhaps something of its practice. Her cousin Othmân has been already noticed as having embraced Christianity at Con-

of Othmân ibn Huweirith,

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him and Mahomet's nurse was great, for tradition tells us that the Prophet promised him *paradise* for marrying her. *Ibid.* p. 187.

The likelihood is that he was of a tender age when carried off by the Arabs, for his mother would not probably have taken one above the years of a child with her on a visit to her family; a period intervened in which the slave changed owners, and in which his father, after long wandering after him, gave up the search. So that he may well have fallen into Khadîja's hands when he was about twenty years old.

Some accounts say that Hakîm brought him with a company of slaves from Syria, and that having offered the choice of them to his aunt, she selected Zeid. Others, that he bought him at the fair of Ocâtz, expressly for his aunt. But the discrepancy is immaterial.

* Both among the Bani Kalb, whose head-quarters were at Dûmat al Jandal, and the Bani Tai, Christianity had made progress.

stantinople, and made an unsuccessful attempt to gain the rule at Mecca. Waraca, another cousin, is said also to have been a convert to Christianity, to have been acquainted with the religious tenets and sacred Scriptures both of Jews and Christians, and even to have copied or translated some portions of the Gospels in Hebrew or Arabic.* and of Waraca.

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* Of Waraca Hishâmi says فاستحكم فى النصرانية و اتبع الكتب من اهلها حتى علم علما من اهل الكتاب —p. 56. To this Tabari adds the Mahometan conceit that he was looking out for the prophet about to rise among the race of Ishmael; و قد كان تنصر و اتبع الكتب حتى ادرك فكان فى ما طلب من ذلك انه كاين لهذه الامة نبي من بني اسماعيل —"He had embraced Christianity, and studied the (inspired) books until he had reached (a knowledge of the faith;) and he was one of those who deduced from thence that there was a prophet about to arise for this nation from the children of Ishmael," (p. 11). So also as to his knowledge of the Old and New Testaments, و قرا الكتب و سمع من اهل التوريت و الا نجيل *Ibid.* p. 91. There is no good authority for believing him to have previously adopted the Jewish religion. Other traditions make him to have copied from the Gospels in Hebrew, or (according to various readings) in Arabic,— فيكتب من الا نجيل بالعبراني ما شاء ان يكتب —Sprenger satisfactorily shows that the expression here used signifies simply *transcription*, not translation, p. 40, note 1.

The traditional tendency would be to magnify Waraca's knowledge of the Scriptures, in order to give more weight to his testimony in favour of Mahomet, and to bear out the fiction that he had good grounds for *expecting* a prophet. Waraca seems to have died before Mahomet *publicly* assumed the prophetic office, and hence we should not trust too much to the accounts of him. Canon I. B, Introduction, chap. i.; see *M. C. de Perceval*, vol. i. p. 322.

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In the following chapter it will be seen that this person had an acknowledged share in satisfying the mind of Mahomet that his mission was divine.

The *Four Enquirers.*

It is a fancy of the traditionists, the origin of which I have already sought to trace,* that shortly before the appearance of Mahomet, several enquirers were not only seeking after the true faith, or as they style it *the Religion of Abraham;* but, warned by the prophecies and the unguarded admissions of Jews and Christians, were in immediate expectation of the coming prophet. Of such enquirers among the Coreish, it is the fashion of Mahometan biographers to specify *four.* Two of these are *Othmân* and *Waraca*, already mentioned. The third is *Obeidallah* (by his mother a grand-son of Abd al Muttalib,) who embraced Islam, emigrated with his brethren in the faith to Abyssinia, and there went over to Christianity.† The fourth is *Zeid*, the grand-son of Nofail, and cousin of Omar.‡ Of him tradition says that he condemned the idolatrous

Obeidalla ibn Jahsh.

Zeid ibn Amr.

* See Canons II. G and H, pp. lxvii. lxviii. of the Introduction, chap. i.

† He emigrated to Abyssinia with those who fled from the persecution at Mecca. After embracing Christianity, he met a party of the Mussalmans, and said to them,—"now *we* see; ye are but feeling after sight and see not." *Hishâmî*, p. 56. He died in Abyssinia, and Mahomet sent for his widow, Omm Habîba, daughter of Abu Sofiân, to Medîna, and married her.

‡ Owing to a debasing Arab custom, which allowed the son to marry (if it did not give him the right to *inherit*) his father's widows, Zeid was at the same time the cousin and the uncle of

sacrifices of the Kaaba, reprobated the burying alive of infant daughters, and "followed the religion of Abraham." But not content with such assertions, the traditionists add that Zeid possessed distinct knowledge of the prophet whose advent was daily to be looked for, and that he left his salutation to be delivered to him when he should arise. Nay, he described his very appearance, stated that he would be of the family of Abd al Muttalib, and even foretold that he would emigrate to Medina! He died while the Kaaba was rebuilding, and was buried at the foot of Mount Hira.*

Omar. Nofail's widow, Jaida, who had already born to him Khattâb (Omar's father), was married by his son Amr, and bore to him Zeid, who was thus the uterine brother of Khattâb, and likewise his nephew.

* The Kâtib al Wâckidi, Tabari, and Hishâmi, have all copious accounts of Zeid. Hishâmi is the least marvellous; but even he says that after Zeid had travelled through Mesopotamia and Syria enquiring of the Rabbis and clergy for "the faith of Abraham," he came at last to a monk in Balcâa, who told him the usual story that a Prophet was just about to arise in Arabia; so he hastened back to see him but was killed by the way. He also states that Zeid was persecuted by his uncle Khattâb, who stationed him at Mount Hira, and would not allow him to enter Mecca lest others should be beguiled to follow his heresy (pp. 56-59). The Kâtib al Wâckidi has several traditions attributing many *purely Mahometan* speeches and practices to him (pp. 255, 255½); see some of these quoted by *Sprenger* (pp. 41-43). He has also the marvellous story (referred to in the text) that Zeid at his death commissioned Amr to give his salutation to the coming Prophet; and that upon Amr fulfilling the commission Mahomet returned the salutation, and added that he "had seen Zeid in Paradise joyfully drawing along his skirts;" (*i.e.* walking with joyous step). It is pre-

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Though such anticipations of the Prophet are to be rejected as puerile and unfounded, and though the manifest tendency to invent legends of this description makes it difficult to sever the real from the fictitious in the matter of these four Enquirers, yet it may be admitted as highly probable that not only in their case but in that of many others also a spirit of religious enquiry, the disposition to reject idolatry, and a perception of the superiority of Judaism and

A spirit of enquiry probably abroad.

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tended that he anticipated the practice, introduced by Mahomet at Medîna, of using the Kaaba as his Kebla. His place of burial is given, by the same authority, as Mount Hirâ.

Tabari's traditions, as usual, improve upon the narrations of his predecessors. The following will illustrate the rapid progress of fiction. Amir ibn Rabia said, I heard Zeid speak as follows:—*Verily, I look for a prophet from among the sons of Ishmael, and from among the children of Abd al Muttalib; and I think that I shall not reach to his day, but verily I believe on him, and I attest his veracity, and I bear witness that he is a true prophet. But if thou survivest to see him, then repeat to him a salutation from me. Now shall I describe to thee his appearance, that he may not remain hid from thee?* Amir said, "Do so." Then follows Zeid's description of the person of the coming prophet, his rejection by the Meccans, his emigration to Yathreb, and his final victory. *Take heed*—proceeded the prophetic sage—*lest thou be deceived in him, for I have visited every city in search of the Faith of Abraham, and every one of the Jews and Christians and Magians say that this religion is about to follow, and they seek for the same signs as I have given unto thee, and they say there will no more be any prophet after him.* "So," continued Amir, "when I was converted, I told the prophet the saying of Zeid, and I recited his salutation: and the prophet returned his salutation, and prayed for mercy upon him; and said, *I have seen him in Paradise*," &c. (p. 83.) It is easy to trace here the fabricated elements, with all their spurious detail, which grew up between the times of Wâckidi and Tabari.

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Christiantity, did exist. With such enquirers Mahomet would no doubt deeply sympathize, and hold converse on the dark and gross idolatry of the Arabs, and the need of a more spiritual faith for their regeneration.

Mahomet was approaching his fortieth year. Always pensive, he had of late become even more thoughtful and retiring. Contemplation and reflection now engaged his whole mind. The debasement of his people, his own uncertainty as to the true Religion, the dim and imperfect shadows of Judaism and Christianity exciting doubts without satisfying them, pressed heavily upon his soul; and he frequently retired to seek relief in meditation amongst the solitary valleys and rocks near Mecca. His favourite spot was a cave in the declivities at the foot of Mount Hira,* a lofty conical hill two

Mahomet seeks after solitary contemplation.

* Since called Jebel Nûr, or Mountain of Light, because Mahomet is said to have received his first revelation there. Ali Bey gives a drawing of it. "It lies," he says, "quarter of a league to the left" of the road to Arafat, (vol. ii. p. 64). Burkhardt says:—"Passing the Sherif's garden house on the road to Arafat, a little further on, we enter a valley, which extends in a direction N.E. by N., and is terminated by the mountain, which is conical. . . . In the rocky floor of a small building ruined by the Wahabys, a cleft is shown about the size of a man in length and breadth. . . . A little below this place is a small cavern in the red granite rock which forms the upper stratum of this mountain; it is called Mogharat el Hira" (p. 175). This valley was often trod by Mahomet on his way to and from the cleft and the cavern.

Sprenger says "Mount Hara is three miles from Mecca." According to his authorities "the cave is four yards long, and its width varies from one to three yards" (p. 94, note 4).

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or three miles north of Mecca. Thither he would retire for days at a time; and his faithful wife sometimes accompanied him.* The continued solitude, instead of stilling his anxiety, magnified into

* The traditionists say that Mahomet used to spend the month of Ramadhân yearly in the cave at Hirâ. Thus Hishâmi;—"Mahomet was in the habit of visiting Hirâ for a month every year. Now that was a religious practice which the Coreish used to perform in the days of their heathenism. And so it was that Mahomet was wont to spend this month at Hirâ, and he used to feed all the poor that resorted to him. And when the period of his visitation at Hirâ was fulfilled, he would return and encompass the Kaaba seven times. And that was in the month of Ramzan." (pp. 60-61); so *Tabari*, pp. 86-90. Others add that Abd al Muttalib commenced the practice, saying "that it was the worship of God which that patriarch used to begin with the new moon of Ramadhân, and continue during the whole of the month." *Sprenger*, p. 94, note 5. Tabari goes still further,—"It was the habit of those Coreishites who aspired to being thought very pious, to spend the month of Rajab at Mount Hira in seclusion and silence. This habit was more particularly observed by the Hâshimites. *Every family had its separate place on the Mount* for this purpose, and some had buildings in which they resided during their seclusion." (As quoted by Dr. Sprenger from the Persian version of Tabari; but I do not find the passage in the original Arabic copy.)

The whole of these traditions are fairly open to doubt. It is highly improbable that the inhabitants of Mecca had any such practice as is attributed to them. It is the tendency of the traditionists to foreshadow the customs and precepts of Islam as if some of them had existed prior to Mahomet, and constituted part of "the religion of Abraham." See Canon H. H. It is very evident that the idea of a fast was *first* borrowed from the Jews, *after* Mahomet had emigrated to Medîna. The early Moslems originally kept their fast like that of the Jews, on the 10th of Moharram. Afterwards when Mahomet receded from the Jews he established a fast of his own in the month of Ramadhân. See *Tabari*, p. 243; *Cnf.* also p. 37 of Geiger's "*Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen.*"

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sterner and more impressive shapes the solemn realities which perplexed and agitated his soul. Close by was the grave of the aged Zeid who, after spending a life-time in the same enquiries, had now passed into the state of certainty;—and might he himself not reach the same assurance without crossing the gate of death?

Spiritual anxiety and groping after light.

All around was bleak and rugged. To the east and south, the vision from the cave of Hira is bounded by lofty mountain ranges, but to the north and west, there is an extensive prospect thus described by the traveller:—"The country before us had a dreary aspect, not a single green spot being visible; barren, black, and grey hills, and white sandy valleys, were the only objects in sight."* There was harmony between these desert scenes of external nature, and the troubled chaotic elements of the spiritual world within. By degrees his impulsive and susceptible mind was wrought up to

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The truth seems to be that Mahomet retired frequently (not periodically) to Mount Hirâ for several days at a time, staying so long as his provisions lasted. Then he would return home, and either remain there for a while, or furnish himself with a fresh supply, and retire again to the cave. *Tabari*, p. 86.

His wife, anxious and surprised at this strange demeanour, may have sometimes accompanied him to watch his movements, and see that no evil befel him.

* *Burkhardt's Travels*, p. 176; *Cnf. Sura* xxxv. v. 28. "Dost thou not see that . . . in the mountains there are strata white and red, of various hues, and others are of a deep black; and of men and beasts and cattle there are whose colours are various in like manner," &c.

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the highest pitch of excitement; and he would give vent to his agitation in wild and rhapsodical language, the counterpart of his inward struggles after truth. The following fragments, which have found their way into the Coran, may perhaps belong to this period.

Poetical fragments of this period.

SURA CIII.

By the declining day I swear!
Verily, man is in the way of ruin;
Excepting such as possess Faith,
And do the things which be right,
And stir up one another to truth and steadfastness.

And again:—

SURA C.

I swear by the rushing Horses that pant!
By those that strike fire with their hoof's flashing!
By those that scour the Enemy's land,
And darken it with dust,
And penetrate thereby the host!
Verily, man is to his Lord ungrateful;
And he is himself a witness thereof;
And verily he is keen in the love of this World's good.
Ah! wotteth he not, when that which is in the Graves shall be scattered abroad,
And that which is in men's hearts shall be brought forth;
Verily, their Lord shall in that day be informed as to them.

And perhaps:—

SURA XCIX.

When the Earth shall tremble with her quaking;
And the Earth shall cast forth her burthens;
And man shall say "What aileth her?"
In that day shall she unfold her tidings,
Because the Lord shall have inspired Her.
In that day shall Mankind advance in ranks, that they may behold their works;

And whoever shall have wrought good of the weight of a Grain shall behold it;
And whoever shall have wrought evil of the weight of a Grain shall behold it.

Nor was he wanting in prayer for guidance to the great Being who, he felt, alone could give it. The following petitions, though probably adapted subsequently to public worship, contain perhaps the germ of his daily prayer at this early period. Prayer for guidance.

SURA I.

Praise be to God, the Lord of Creation,
The All-merciful, the All-compassionate!
Ruler of the day of Reckoning!
Thee we worship, and Thee we invoke for help.
Lead us in the straight path;—
The path of those upon whom Thou hast been gracious,
Not of those that are the objects of Wrath, or that are in Error.*

How such aspirations developed themselves into the belief that the subject of them was inspired from heaven, is a dark and painful theme, which I purpose to consider in the following chapter.

* Of the four Suras above quoted, which may be classed as the earliest extant composition of Mahomet, the ciii. and c. are generally placed by the Mahometan traditionists early, *i.e.*, about the 10th or 12th in the general order of the Suras of the Coran. But the xcix. is placed very late; it is reckoned about 90th, and generally represented to be a Medîna Sura, though some are critical enough to dispute this. The reader will hence perceive how entirely dependent we are on *internal* evidence in fixing the chronological order of the Coran.

Sura i. is said to have been more than once revealed, which (if the expression has any definite meaning at all) may signify that, although one of the earliest pieces, it was afterwards recast to suit the requirements of public worship.

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CHAPTER THIRD.

The Belief of Mahomet in his own Inspiration.

Ætat 40–43.

Mahomet, agitated by spiritual anxiety, gives vent to his thoughts in fragments of poetry.

Our sketch of the life of Mahomet has now reached a point when anxious yearnings after religious truth were springing up within him; and the mind, brooding over the gross superstition and abject worldliness of the inhabitants of Mecca, and bewildered by its own speculations amidst the uncertain flickerings of spiritual light ever and anon flashing around, began to unburthen itself in fragments of wild and impassioned poetry. Such rhapsodies often assume the character of soliloquies, full of melancholy reflection upon the state and prospects of mankind; sometimes fraught with burning words and imagery of terror, they seem intended as a warning or admonition to neighbours and fellow-citizens; at times, again, they exhibit a mind intent upon itself, oppressed by perplexity and distress, and seeking for comfort and assurance by fleeing to its Maker.

Such fragments only partially.

It seems probable that such fragments were frequent and numerous But few of them remain

to us. They did not fit in with the subsequent theory, which holds every word of the Coran as a message emanating directly from God; and it is probable that the more remarkable of them, imprinted indelibly on the hearts of those who shared in the early enquiries of Mahomet, have alone found a place in his Revelation. It is thus that in the whole Corân we find only eighteen Suras, which can with any likelihood be assigned to this period of his life. To trace the development of spiritual conception and religious belief in the mind of Mahomet, it is necessary that copious extracts from these be laid before the reader.* preserved in the Coran.

Of the soliloquies, the subjoined Sura is a specimen. Specimens of these fragments.

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* In an Appendix to this volume, I have endeavoured to arrange the Suras of the Coran in the probable order in which they were composed, or produced, by Mahomet. Any such arrangement can, however, be only approximate; because, as explained in the first chapter of the Introduction, the chronology of the several Suras is to be gathered alone from the subject matter, from internal intimations of style, and from references to passing events. The earlier Suras are generally composed each of a single short piece, delivered all at once, and are therefore in this respect more easily classified than the later Suras, which are made up of fragments given forth on various occasions. As they advance in time, the Suras gradually become longer; but they have been arranged in the present Coran in an order the reverse of this, the longest being generally placed first and the shortest last. Hence it is that the casual reader of the Coran, by perusing it in its present inverted order, can form no correct conception of the origin and development of Mahomet's system.

Sura *ci.*

SURA CI.

That which striketh! What is it which striketh?
And what shall certify thee what THE STRIKING meaneth?
On that day Mankind shall be like unto Moths scattered abroad.
And the Mountains shall be like unto Wool of divers colours carded.
Then truly, whosesoever Balances are heavy,* he shall enter into a life of Happiness;
And whosesoever Balances are light, to him verily appertaineth the Pit.
And what shall certify thee what the PIT meaneth?
A raging FIRE!

Of the following verses, some are represented as pronounced directly by the Deity, but probably as yet only by poetical fiction.

Sura *xcv.*

SURA XCV.

I swear by the Fig and Olive,
By Mount Sinai, and by this inviolate Territory!
That WE verily created Man of a most excellent Structure,
Then WE rendered him the lowest of the low;—
Excepting such as believe and do the things that are right;
For unto them shall be given a Reward that fadeth not away.
Then, what shall cause thee after this to deny the Reckoning?
What! is not GOD the most righteous of all Judges?

Warning and expostulation.

The voice of expostulation and alarm was raised in accents such as these:—

Sura *civ.*

SURA CIV.

Woe unto the Backbiter and Defamer;—
Unto him that heapeth up Riches, and numbereth them for the Future!
He thinketh surely that his Wealth shall be with him for ever.
Nay! for verily he shall be cast into the crushing Fire;
And what shall cause thee to know what the CRUSHING FIRE is?

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* *i.e., with good deeds.*

The Fire of GOD kindled,
Which shall mount above the Hearts;
It shall verily rise above them as a Covering,
Stretched upon lofty Columns.

The 92nd Sura, after a variety of wild and incoherent oaths, proceeds thus:—

Sura *xcii*

[v. 12.] Verily it is OUR part to give Direction,
And unto US belongeth the Future and the Past.
Wherefore, I warn you of the Fire which breaketh into Flame;
There shall not be cast therein but the most Wretched,—
He that rejected the Truth, and turned his back.
But whoso greatly feareth the Lord shall escape therefrom,—
He that giveth of his Wealth to purify his Soul withal;
And who offereth not his Favours unto any with the hope of any recompense,
Except the recompense of seeking the Face of his Lord Most High;
And surely he shall be satisfied.

Rhyming style.

The rhyming style adopted by Mahomet, even in his earliest compositions, will perhaps be illustrated by the following Sura. Each verse ends with the syllable *hâ*,* and the corresponding word is indicated by italics.

Sura *xci.*

SURA XCI.

By the Sun and *his* early splendour!
By the Moon when she followeth *him!*
By the Day when it showeth *its* glory!
By the Night when it covereth *the same!*
By the Heavens and Him that made *them!*
By the Earth and Him that spread *it* forth!
By the Soul and Him that framed *it,*
And inspired it with its Wickedness and *its* Virtue!

* The feminine pronoun of the third person.

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Verily he is blessed that purifieth *the same;*
And he is wretched that corrupteth *the same.*
The Thamudites rejected the message of the Lord in *their* impiety;
When the most abandoned among *them* arose.
(Now the Prophet* of the Lord had said unto them, "It is the she-camel of the Lord; Give ye drink unto *her*;")
But they rejected him, and cut *her* in pieces;
Wherefore the Lord overthrew them in their iniquities, and rendered unto them a recompense equal with *their Sin;*
And He feareth not the issue *thereof.*

Arab and Jewish legend.

Allusion is sometimes made, though in a very brief and vague form, both to Arab and Jewish legend. Thus in the 89th Sura:—

Sura *lxxxix.*

[v. 6.] What! hast thou not seen how thy Lord dealt with the children of AD,—
The Iremites possessed of pillars
The like have not been builded in any City!—
And with the THAMUDITES which hewed out the Rock in the Valley;—
And with PHARAOH that used the Stakes?
These all behaved insolently in the Earth,
And multiplied Wickedness therein;
Wherefore thy Lord poured upon them the mingled Cup of his Wrath,
Verily thy Lord is upon His Watch-tower, &c.

Sura *cv.* and *cvi.*

And there was not wanting special appeal to national considerations. The 105th Sura, which recounts God's mercies to the Meccans in the overthrow of Abraha and preservation of their city, belongs probably to this period. And also the following:—

* Sâlih, the prophet of the Thamudites.

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SURA CVI.

For the stirring up of the COREISH;—
The stirring of them up unto the Winter and Summer expeditions (of merchandise.)
And let them worship the Lord of this *House*,
He that hath provided them with food against Hunger,
And hath granted them immunity from Fear.*

Sura xc.: "the two Paths."

In elucidation of Mahomet's honest striving after Truth at this time, another Sura may be quoted in which the two paths of Virtue and Vice, and the difficulties of the straight way, are set forth:

SURA XC.

Verily I swear by this Territory,
(And thou art a resident† of this Territory;)
By the Begetter, and by that which is begotten!
Surely we have created Man in Trouble.
Ah! doth he think indeed that no one hath power over him?
He saith,—"I have wasted much wealth."
Ah! doth he think that no one seeth him?
What! Have WE not made him two Eyes and two Lips;
And guided him unto the TWO ROADS.
Yet he applieth himself not unto the Ascent;—
And what shall cause thee to know what THE ASCENT is?—
Freeing the Captive,
And giving Food in the day of Want
To the orphan that is near of kin,
Or to the Poor that lieth in the Dust;—

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* In allusion to the inviolability of the sacred territory from foreign attack.

† حل —Abd al Cadir, the Urdu translator of the Coran, renders this as signifying that Mahomet was "free," *i.e.* from the obligation of holding the Meccan Territory inviolable, and therefore not blameable for invading it in after days with an army!

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Further, the Righteous must be of those that believe, and stir up one another unto Stedfastness and Compassion.
These are the Heirs of Blessedness.
But they who deny Our Signs, shall be the Heirs of Wretchedness;
Around them the Fire shall close.

Mahomet's early religious poetry.

It is highly probable that Mahomet occupied himself with such thoughts, and gave vent to his feelings in language similar to the above quotations, for several years before he assumed the office of a divine teacher. The early Suras, and we may suppose many other reflective and didactic pieces not preserved, because not purporting to proceed as inspired from God, would be recorded by the aged Waraca, by Ali who was still a boy, and possibly by Khadîja herself* or by some member of her family which, as we have seen, contained persons enquiring after the true religion, and more or less acquainted with Judaism and Christianity. The friends and some of the relatives of Mahomet listened with reverence to his admonitions, and sought to follow his injunctions as those of a faithful teacher guided haply by the Spirit of God. Khadîja his loving wife, Zeid and Ali his adopted sons, and perhaps Abu Bakr his bosom friend, with

His early followers.

* "Tabari informs us that when Mohammad first entered on his office, even his wife Khadîja had read the Scriptures and was acquainted with the history of the prophets." *Sprenger*, p. 100. But this is from the *Persian* translation of Tabari, and does not appear in the original Arabic copy. The words are:— خدیجه بکتابها پیشین خوانده بود و خبرها پیغمبران دانسته *

Waraca who saw in his first teaching the counterpart of his own ideas, were amongst the earliest of his disciples.

Makes no impression on his fellow-citizens generally.

But without this little circle, Superstition and the World held undisputed sway, and expostulation was met by a gross and repellent darkness. The kind and generous Abu Tâlib smiled at the enthusiasm of his nephew. Abu Lahab, another uncle, mocked and insulted him. Abu Jahl and his party sneered. The great body of the Coreish were careless and indifferent. As Mahomet passed by the knots that clustered about the Kaaba discussing the events of the day, they would point disdainfully at him as a half-witted creature.

Necessity and likelihood of a divine commission

The more susceptible amongst the citizens listened, perhaps, at first with attention. But when pressed to practical and decisive steps, they would answer;—"It is well for Jews and Christians to follow the purer faith thou speakest of. *They*, we know, have had prophets bringing them a message of the will of God. Let *us* be content with the light our Maker hath given unto us, and remain as we are. *If a Prophet had been sent unto us, we should no doubt have followed his directions, and been equally devout and spiritual in our worship as the Jews and Christians.*"* Mahomet felt the force of such a

* *Sura* xxxv. 42. Mahomet there quotes this statement as showing that his people had at first declared their willingness to follow a prophet, if he were only *sent to them;* but that now a Prophet *had been sent*, they disbelieved him and broke

reply, for it was in unison with hidden thoughts, ever present yet undeveloped in his heart. Would the merciful God be unmindful of the appeal thus virtually made to Him for guidance? The appeal itself might perhaps in reality be a divine intimation requiring him to furnish that direction so urgently needed, and so sincerely desired. And, again, whence this rush of inspiration regarding the Unity and providence of God, and a future recompense in Heaven and Hell? Whence the ecstatic moments, the flow of burning thoughts, the spontaneous burst of eloquence and heavenly speech, which gave form and substance to the long conceived yearnings of his heart, and transformed them as it were into the words of God himself? Could the Prophets of old have had a more convincing test of their inspiration? What if all this formed a supernatural call, a divine Mission?

Supposed process by which the conviction that he was to be the

Thus by degrees he was led on to believe that God had called him to preach reformation to his countrymen. But was he authorized further to use

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their promise. Such notices are frequent in the Coran, and the pretext assigned in the text, was, no doubt, one of the earliest which Mahomet had to answer.

Compare *Sura* vi. 155-157. "And this Book WE have sent down,—blessed; wherefore follow it and fear God that ye may find mercy. Lest ye should say;—*Verily the Scripture hath been revealed to two Peoples before us, but we are unable to read in their language.* Or lest ye should say,—*if the Scripture had been revealed to us, we surely would have followed the direction better than they.* And verily a clear exposition hath come unto you from your Lord,—a direction and mercy," &c.

the name of the Lord, and to recite his warnings threats and promises as words of Inspiration? It would surely be to abandon his position if he stood forth as a *Messenger* from God to reclaim the Meccans to Himself, and yet brought no message from Him that sent him. The work was evidently of God; why then question that these welling thoughts and living words were *intended* by God as His commands? And, ever and anon, the rising doubt would be quelled by a glance at *the end*. For the glorious object of converting his people, could there be any thing wrong in the only suitable means? Nay, this strange mental struggle itself seemed but the first bursting forth of inspiration. Would he dare to stay the divine emotion, repress the work within, and fight against the Lord himself? Why should he hesitate to take the name of God upon his lips, go forth boldly as his Legate, and trust that the same spirit which had guided Jewish and Christian prophets would put words into his mouth? The God that overrules all nature even to the minutest movements of the brute creation, without whom not a leaf falls to the ground,—He would not suffer these mental longings to miss the aim for which they were destined. Into His hands, then, he would commit himself and, secure in the singleness of his object, the glory of God and the good of his fellows, he would go forth speaking His words.

messenger of God, gained ground.

While absorbed by reflections such as these, sometimes doubting, sometimes believing, Mahomet

Mental depression and grounds of re-assurance.

at seasons suffered grievous mental distraction. To this period may be attributed the Suras in which, after deep depression, he sought to re-assure his soul by remembering the past favours of the Almighty.

Sura *xciii.*

SURA XCIII.

By the rising Sunshine!
By the Night when it darkeneth!
Thy Lord hath not removed from thee, neither hath He been displeased.
And verily the Future shall be better unto thee than the Past.
Thy Lord shall shortly dispense unto thee a Gift; and thou shalt be satisfied.
What! Did He not find thee an Orphan, and give thee a Home?
And found thee astray, and directed thee?
Now, therefore, as touching the Orphan, do not oppress him;
And as touching him that asketh of thee, repulse him not;
And as touching the Favours of thy Lord, rehearse them.

Sura *xciv.*

SURA XCIV.

What! Have we not opened for thee thy Breast?
And taken off from thee thy Burden,—
That which galled thy Back;
And exalted the Mention of thee?
Then truly with the Difficulty, there shall be Ease.
Verily with the Difficulty, there shall be Ease.
And when thou art set at liberty then labour,
And towards thy Lord raise thy Desire.

The following Sura refers to the taunts of those who reproached him with the death of his sons, as a mark of God's displeasure.

Sura *cviii.*

SURA CVIII.

Surely WE have given unto thee an Abundance;
Wherefore offer unto the Lord thy prayer, and sacrifice unto Him.
Verily whoso hateth thee shall be childless.

Notwithstanding such consolations, his distress was sometimes insupportable, and he repeatedly meditated suicide. What if all this were but the simulation of Divine impulse, the stirrings of the Evil One and his emissaries? Was any crime so awful as to forge the name and authority of GOD? Rather than expose himself to a risk so terrible, he would at once anticipate the possibility by casting himself headlong from one of these wild cliffs. An invisible influence appeared to hold him back.* Was it a divine influence? Or might it also not be diabolical? Seeks to commit suicide.

But the old train of reasoning would again revive in his heart stronger than ever. And now, when fully surrendered to it, bright visions of a united people abjuring their gross idolatry, would rise before him.—"And I, thus acknowledged their Prophet, why should I not be also their Leader and their Chief? Yes, Faith and Piety shall reign throughout Arabia; and, if need be, the Sword shall be bared to compel men to enter into the Kingdom of God;— Resuscitation of the belief in his divine mission, mingled with ambition.

> When the Help of the Lord shall come and Victory,
> And thou shalt see Men entering into the Faith of God in multitudes,
> Then celebrate His Praise, and ask Pardon of Him, for He is forgiving.†"

Moses led forth his people, and so did other Jewish

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* *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 37½; *Tabari*, pp. 90, 96.

† *Sura* cx.

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Chieftains, to do battle for the Lord against the Idolaters. And why should not I, the Vicegerent of God, do likewise; and bring all Arabia in godly submission prostrate at His feet? It will surely be for *His* glory and for the furtherance of *His* Kingdom. Then, what vain abominations are wrought within the cities of Syria, Greece, and Rome; they have set up the Queen of Heaven, and burned incense unto her! But they, too, will listen to the voice of reason recalling them to the worship of God and setting forth his Unity. They have a Revelation, and profess to obey it. I will show to them from their own Book that they have corrupted and obscured the Truth. And Egypt, Persia, Abyssinia, Hîra,—all around, why should I not dash to the ground the Idols, and every thing that exalteth itself against the True God;—if only my people will be convinced and rally around me to fight the battles of the Lord. Doth not the whole world, Jew and Christian, weary of strife and discord, yearn for a Prophet who shall restore unity and peace? Will not all, then, flock to my Standard when I proclaim myself that which I surely feel myself to be,—the Prophet of the Lord?"* Such conceptions at this time were, it may be, faint and dim, but there is little doubt that they

* See *Hishâmi*, pp. 136, 165, and 290. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 38½; *Tabari*, p. 122. Mahomet is there represented at a very early stage assuring the Coreish that, if they would only be converted to his faith, they would conquer, not Arabia alone, but all the surrounding nations.

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actually existed in the mind of Mahomet. It is probable that they formed the evil and delusive element which, first mingling itself with the pure longing after Truth, led to the fatal and fearful error of speaking falsely and without commission in the name of God. AMBITION, once admitted, opened an easy breach for the temptations of the world, if not also for the suggestions of the Evil One. Yet Ambition may have been so subtilely mingled with spiritual aspirations, that happily it escaped the observation of Mahomet himself.

At this crisis, the fate of Mahomet and of Islam trembled in the balance. It was his hour of trial, and he fell.

Mahomet remains in expectation of a Divine commission.

On the one hand, he was surrounded by a little knot of believing adherents. Spiritual truth seemed to shine, clear and radiant as a sunbeam, upon his own heart; ecstatic trances impressed a seal, apparently divine, upon his convictions; and (though ambition might be lurking) he was conscious of a sincere desire, and fancied that he perceived a divine Commission, to call forth his people from darkness into light. On the other side, the ungodly laughed him to scorn; while his solemn expostulations and warnings were treated, even by the wise and sober, as the effusions of a fond enthusiast. *Before a* DIVINE COMMISSION *all difficulties would vanish.* He would wait then for the inspiring influence of the Holy Spirit to lead him, as it had oft times led the Prophets before him, in the

right way. Gabriel,* perhaps, would visit him, as he visited Zacharias and Mary, to announce the advent of a new Dispensation.

Vision of Gabriel, who brings the commission to "*Recite in the name of God.*"

He was seated or wandering amidst the peaks of Hirâ, buried in reveries such as these, when suddenly an apparition rose before his eyes. The imagination of a heavenly Visitant that had long flitted vaguely before him, was realized in the vision by his excited fancy. It was no other than Gabriel, the Messenger of God, who now appeared in the sky and, approaching within two bows' length of the Prophet, brought from his Master this memorable behest;—

Sura *xcvi.*

SURA XCVI.

RECITE in the name of the Lord who created;—
Created Man from nought but congealed blood;—
RECITE! For thy Lord is beneficent.
It is He who hath taught (to record Revelation) with the Pen;—
Hath taught Man that which he knoweth not.
Nay, verily, Man is rebellious;
Because he seeth himself to abound in Wealth.
Verily, unto thy Lord is the return of all.
Hast thou seen him that holdeth back
The Servant (of God) when he prayeth?

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* It is clear that at a later period at least, if not from the first, Mahomet confounded *Gabriel* with the *Holy Ghost*. The idea may have arisen from some such misapprehension as the following. Mary conceived Jesus by the power of the Holy Ghost which overshadowed her. But it was Gabriel who visited Mary to announce the conception of the Saviour. The Holy Ghost was, therefore, another name for Gabriel. We need hardly wonder at this ignorance when Mahomet seems to have believed that Christians held Mary to be the third Person in the Trinity!

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What thinkest thou? had he listened to right Direction,
And commanded unto Piety?
Dost thou not see that he hath rejected the Truth and turned his back?
What! Doth he not know that God seeth?
Nay, verily, if he forbear not, WE shall drag him by the Forelock,—
The lying, sinful Forelock!
Then let him call his company of friends, and We shall call the guards of Hell;
Nay! submit not unto him; but worship, and draw nigh unto the Lord.

Mahomet thenceforward assumes the name of GOD in his Revelations;

Thus was Mahomet, by whatever deceptive process, led to the high blasphemy of forging the name of God, a crime repeatedly stigmatized in the Coran itself as the greatest that mankind can commit. Thenceforward he spoke literally *in the name of the Lord*. And so scrupulous was he lest there should be in his pseudo-Inspiration even the appearance of a human colouring, that every sentence of the Coran, whether of admonition, of warning, of instruction, or of professed actual revelation, is prefaced by the Divine command, 'SPEAK' or 'SAY;' which, if not expressed, must always be understood. Thus Sura CXII.,—

SAY:—He is GOD alone: GOD the Eternal!
He begetteth not, and He is not begotten;
And there is not any like unto Him.

and becomes the commissioned Prophet of God.

This commission pervaded the entire future course of Mahomet, and mingled with his every action. He was now the Servant, the Prophet, the

Vicegerent of God; and however much the sphere of action created by this principle might expand in ever widening circles, the principle itself was from the commencement absolute and complete. How far the two ideas of a resolution subjectively formed and involving a spontaneous course of action, and of a divine inspiration objectively imparted and independent of his own will, were at first consciously and simultaneously present, and in what respective degrees, it is difficult to conjecture. But it is certain that the conception of a Divine commission soon took the entire and undivided possession of his soul; and, coloured though it often was by the events and inducements of the day, or mingled with apparently incongruous intentions and desires, retained a paramount influence until the hour of his death. The 96th Sura was, in fact, the starting point of Islam. Theologians and Biographers generally hold it to be the first revealed Sura; and Mahomet himself used to refer to it as the commencement of his inspiration.*

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* Several years after, he mentions the vision which he believed himself now to have seen, in the following words:—

Verily it is no other than a Revelation that has been inspired:
One mighty and strong taught it unto him,—
One endued with wisdom; and he stood
In the highest part of the Horizon,
Then he drew near and approached.
And he reached to the distance of two bows' length, or yet nearer:

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But the Divine commission was unheeded at Mecca. Scorn and abuse gathered thicker than ever around him. He was taunted as a Poet carried away by wild fancy; as a Magician or a Soothsayer, for his oaths and rhapsodies resembled in style the oracles of such; or as one possessed by Genii and Demons.

The commission slighted by the Meccans.

Grieved and dispirited, he fell back upon his commission. Was it a warrant and command to *publish* his message even to a stiff-necked and rebellious people, or not rather a simple attestation, for himself and his willing adherents alone, that his doctrine was true? Engrossed with these reflections, the Prophet stretched himself upon his carpet, and, wrapping himself in his garments, fell into a trance or vision. The Angel was at hand, and Mahomet was aroused from his despondency to energy and action, by this animating message:

The vision, and *command to preach.*

SURA LXXIV. Sura *lxxiv.*

Oh thou that art covered!
Arise and PREACH!
And magnify thy Lord;
And purify thy Clothes;
And depart from Uncleanness.

And he revealed unto his servant that which he revealed.
The heart did not belie in that which he saw.
What! Will ye then dispute with him concerning that which he saw?

Sura liii. 4-12.

He then alludes to a *second* vision of Gabriel, which will be referred to below.

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And show not thy Favours, in the hope of self-aggrandisement;
And wait patiently for thy Lord.
* * * * *
Leave me and him whom I have created alone;
On whom I have bestowed abundant Riches,
And Sons dwelling before him;
And disposed his affairs prosperously;—
Yet he desireth that I should add thereto.
Nay! Because he is to OUR Signs an Adversary,
I will afflict him with fierce Calamity;
For he imagined and devised Mischief in his heart.
May he be damned! how he devised;
Again, may he be damned! how he devised!
Then he looked;
Then he frowned and scowled;
Then he turned his back and looked contemptuously:—
And he said, "*Verily, this is nothing but Magick that will be wrought;**
Verily, this is no other than the speech of a Mortal."
Now, will I cast him into Hell fire.
And what shall cause thee to know what HELL-FIRE is?
It leaveth not, neither doth it suffer to escape,
Candescent on the Skin.
Over it are nineteen (Angels).†
* * * * *
* * * * *
Nay, by the Moon!
By the Night when it retireth!
By the Morn when it reddeneth!
Verily it is one of the most weighty matters,—
A warning to Mankind,—

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* Alluding to the doctrine of the Resurrection. The re-vivification of dry bones and dust was laughed at as mere magic.

† At this point is interposed a passage (v. 31) evidently produced many years after, probably at Medîna, in reply to certain objections raised as it would appear by the Jews respecting the *number* of the infernal guard.

To him amongst you that desireth to advance, or to remain behind.
Every Soul lieth in pledge for that which it hath wrought;—
Excepting the Heirs of God's right hand.
In Gardens, they shall enquire concerning the Wicked;—
"*What hath cast you into Hell?*"
And they shall reply,—"*We were not of those that prayed;*
And we did not feed the Poor;
And we babbled vainly with the vain Babblers;
And we were Rejecters of the Day of reckoning;
Until the Conviction thereof overtook us."
And the intercession of the Interceders shall not avail them.
Then what aileth them that they turn aside from the Admonition;—
As if they were affrighted Asses
Fleeing from a Lion?
And every one of them desireth that expanded Pages be given unto him.*
Nay! they dread not the Life to come.
Nay! This is a Warning;
And whoso chooseth is warned thereby.
And there shall none be warned but as the Lord pleaseth.
He is to be feared, and He is the Forgiver.

Vindictive abuse of his opponents.

It has been thought expedient to introduce this Sura nearly entire, not only for the remarkable commission in its opening lines *to preach publicly*, which forms a new and marked stage in the mission of Mahomet, but as the best means of conveying some idea of the style of revelation adopted by Mahomet about the third or fourth year of his prophetical life. The person so vehemently condemned

* *i.e.* that the divine message recorded upon pages should be miraculously brought from above to each objector, in proof of Mahomet's mission.

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is supposed to have been Walíd, the honoured Chief of Mecca, who, as mentioned in the preceding chapter, was the first to raise his pick-axe on the rebuilding of the Kaaba. The heart of Mahomet was vindictive; and he dealt, through his Revelation, reproach and condemnation in the severest and most crushing terms against his adversaries. It was thus he cursed Abu Lahab his own uncle, and the father-in-law of two of his daughters, on account of his contemptuous bearing:—

Sura *cxi.*

SURA CXI.

Damned be ABU LAHAB'S hands; and let himself be damned!
His Riches shall not profit him, nor that which he hath gained.
He shall be cast into the FIRE of flame,*
And his Wife also laden with Fuel,
About her Neck shall be a rope of Palm-fibre.†

I refrain however from entering here upon the *consequences* of the public preaching, and the struggle with idolatry. Our present object is simply to trace the growth of the idea of inspiration and a mission from the Deity in his mind; and this I have attempted to do from the only reliable source—the revelations of Mahomet himself.

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* ذات لهب —a play upon the word *Lahab*, which signifies *flame*, as well as his adversary's name.

† The story is that she had strewed Mahomet's path with a bundle of thorns, whence her punishment. Abu Lahab is said, at an assembly summoned by Mahomet to hear his message, to have exclaimed, "*Let him be damned! Is this all he hath called us together for?*" Whereupon this passage was revealed, damning Abu Lahab.

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But in order to give a full and perfect view of the progress of Mahomet towards a belief in his own inspiration, it is necessary to place before the reader the statements of Tradition. These, however, are at this point peculiarly untrustworthy. Mahomet himself, from whose lips alone any satisfactory account of the mental process could have been gained, was reserved, if not entirely silent, on the subject. It is likely that the painful season of perturbation and dubitancy recurred ungratefully to his memory; and that the grand result, the salient point of his career, viz., the commission to recite and to preach in the name of God, obscured, if it did not entirely hide, the steps which led to it.

Traditional account of the first beginning of Inspiration untrustworthy:

1st—because Mahomet did not speak on the subject;

Again, the fixed dogma with which every Mahometan sets out, that the Coran contains no Sura, no sentence, nor even a single word, which did not emanate by direct communication from God, has confined and misled the conclusions of the biographers.* It would be blasphemy with them to hold that anything of *human* origin,—any fragments of the spontaneous musings of the Prophet's mind before his revelations were cast in the unvarying mould of inspiration, have found their way into the Coran; and hence they miss the clue which the above or similar speculations *may* supply for tracing approximately the course of Mahomet's mental and spiritual history.

2nd—because the theory of Inspiration prevented free enquiry;

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* See p. ii. chap. i. of the Introduction.

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3rd—because the subject gave birth to miraculous fabrication.

Lastly, whatever facts the biographers may have preserved from the tradition of Khadîja's recollections* have been greatly distorted by the miraculous asscoiations cast around them. Mahomet himself was not unwilling to countenance such superstitious belief. And there is no subject which, in the growth of tradition, would imperceptibly acquire more wonderful and mysterious colouring than the communication of Divine monitions to the heart of Mahomet, and more especially their first beginnings,† Having thus warned the reader against a too implicit faith in the representations of Tradition, I proceed to give them as nearly as possible in the original words.

TRADITIONAL STATEMENT.

The first beginnings of the Prophet's inspiration were "*real visions.*" Every vision that he saw was clear as the breaking forth of the morning. This continued for some time, and he grew extremely fond of privacy;—nothing was so pleasing to him as retirement. So he used to repair to a cave on Mount Hirâ, where he passed whole days

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* See p. liv. of the same chap. Canon I. B. It is to be remembered that this period preceded the time at which Mahomet stood forth prominently to public notice, as a preacher. *Then* his system had been matured, and the idea of Inspiration formed. But before that time he could not have been the object of much observation. Khadîja must have been almost the only witness of his earliest mental struggles. Ali was but a boy; and it is doubtful how far Zeid and Abu Bakr were yet on sufficiently intimate terms with him, to be made the confidants of his most secret thoughts.

† *Vide* chap. i. Introduction, p. lxiii. Canon II. D.

and nights alone before he revisited his family; then he would return to Khadîja, and remain for a time at home through affection for her. This went on until the Truth burst upon him, which happened in the cave of Hirâ. Visions and Solitude.

About this time, while he was at Ajyâd,* he saw an angel in the sky calling to him, "*Oh Mahomet! I am Gabriel!*" and he was terrified, for so often as he raised his head to the heavens he saw the angel.† And he returned hastily to Khadîja, and told her all that had happened; and he said, "Oh Khadîja! I have never detested anything with greater abhorrence than these idols and soothsayers, and now verily I fear lest I should turn out a soothsayer myself." "Never, my cousin! say not so. The Lord will not treat thee thus;" and she proceeded to recount his many virtues, on which she founded this assurance. Then she repaired to Waraca,‡ and repeated to him what Mahomet had told her. "By the Lord!" replied the aged man, "thy uncle's son speaketh the truth. This verily is the beginning of prophecy. And there shall come unto him the Gabriel appears to Mahomet. He fears becoming a soothsayer. Khadîja and Waraca reassure him.

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* This I conclude is the same as the modern *Jyâd*, the mountain tract South of Mecca.

† Other traditions say only that he saw a light, and heard a voice. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 37.

‡ Wâckidi adds, "this was the *first* time she went to Waraca," as if there were also a second visit, which, however, is not mentioned,—the tradition being fragmentary. It can hardly mean "the first" in the sense that she had never visited him before.

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Great Law,* like unto the Law of Moses. Wherefore charge him that he entertain none but hopeful thoughts within his heart. If he should declare himself a Prophet while I am yet alive, I will believe in him and I will stand by him."

Inspiration ceases, and he meditates suicide.

Now the first Sura revealed to Mahomet was the 94th, *Recite in the name of the Lord*, &c.; and that descended on him in the cave of Hirâ. After this he waited several days† without seeing Gabriel. And he became greatly downcast, so that he went out at one time to the Mount of Thubeir, and at another to Hirâ, seeking to cast himself headlong from thence. While thus intent on self-destruction he was suddenly arrested by a voice from heaven. He looked up, and lo! Gabriel upon a throne between the heavens and the earth, who said, "*Oh Mahomet! thou art the Prophet of the Lord, in truth, and I am Gabriel!*" Then Mahomet turned to go to his own house; and the Lord comforted him, and strengthened his heart. And thereafter Revelations began to follow one upon another with frequency.‡

Gabriel again appears and comforts him.

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* Al namûs al akbar;—*namûs* being the Arabic form for Nomos, "the Law."

† ايام —"days." The period is indefinite.

‡ The above account is from the Kâtib al Wâckidi, who is at this point more succinct and freer from the marvellous than Hishâmi. Tabari again surpasses Hishâmi in the miraculous character of his statements; and the number and variety of his absurd traditions illustrate the rapidity with which, in the third century, fabricated

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The period succeeding the revelation of the 96th Sura, during which inspiration was suspended, and Mahomet in despondency contemplated suicide, is

Variety of accounts regarding the stoppage of Inspiration.

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stories obtained currency. The following is an outline from Hishâmi and Tabari, of the current version of the first stirrings of inspiration.

"On the night whereon the Lord was minded to deal graciously with him, Mahomet relates that Gabriel came to him as he slept with his family in the cave of Hirâ; and he held in his hand a piece of silk with writing thereon, and he said *Read!* Mahomet replied, *I do not* (*i.e.* cannot) *read.* Whereupon the angel laid hold of him so tightly, that he thought death had come upon him. Then said Gabriel a second time, *Read!* And Mahomet replied, *What shall I read?* which words he uttered only to escape the previous agony. And Gabriel proceeded:—*Read* (recite) *in the name of thy Lord, &c.;*—repeating the 96th Sura to the end of v. 5; and when he had ended, the angel left him; and "the words, said Mahomet, "were as though they had been graven on my heart." Suddenly the thought occurred to him that he was possessed of evil spirits, and he meditated suicide; but as he rushed forth with the intention of casting himself down a precipice, he was arrested by Gabriel, and stood for a long time transfixed by the sight of him. At last the vision disappeared, and Mahomet returned to Khadîja who, alarmed at his absence, had sent messengers to Mecca in quest of him. In consternation he threw himself into her lap, and told her all that had occurred. She reassured him, saying that he would surely be a prophet, and went off to Waraca, who confirmed her in the same belief.

Another account adds that she took Mahomet to Waraca, who foretold to him that he would be rejected by his people, and expelled from Mecca, but that if he himself survived to that period, he would assist and defend him. *Tabari*, p. 87.

The story that Khadîja went to the Monk Addâs, who gave her a book from which she might learn whether the visitant was an Angel or a Devil, is evidently a fiction, and does not appear to exist in any early authority. See *Sprenger*, p. 107.

Another story is that Khadîja, to assure Mahomet, tested the character of the Spirit, by making him sit first on her right knee,

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generally represented as of longer duration than in the above statement. This interval, styled the *Fatrah* or "Intermission," is variously held to have lasted from six months to three years. At its close, the 74th and 93rd Suras, containing assurance of mercy and the command to preach, were delivered. The accounts, however, are throughout confused, if not contradictory; and we can only gather with certainty that there was a time (corresponding with the deductions which we have drawn from the Coran itself), during which the mind of Mahomet hung in suspense, and doubted the Divine mission.*

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then on her left, in both of which positions the apparition continued. Then she took him in her lap, and removed her veil, or uncovered her garments, when it disappeared,—thus proving that the spirit was a modest and virtuous being. Thereupon Khadîja exclaimed, *Rejoice my cousin, for by the Lord! it is an Angel, and no Devil.*

Some Christian commentators refer to this tradition in illustration of 1 Cor. xi. 10, "For this cause ought the woman to have power (a veil or covering) on her head because of the Angels:"—that is, according to their explanation, in order to shield them from the glances of the evil spirits. An unlikely interpretation. See *Stanley, in loco.*

On another occasion, being terrified he entreated Khadîja to cover him up, on which was revealed the 74th Sura, beginning *Oh thou covered!* Again the Prophet having had no visits from Gabriel for some time, Khadîja said to him;—*Verily I fear that God is displeased with thee;* whereupon was revealed Sura xciii;—*Thy Lord hath not removed from thee, neither is he displeased, &c.* But all such traditions are evidently founded upon the attempt to explain, or illustrate, the passages of the Coran referred to.

* Some state that he "used to hear a voice and see a light," without receiving any revelation for *seven* years; and that the

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What was the character of Mahomet's ecstatic periods,—whether they were simply reveries of profound meditation, or swoons connected with a morbid excitability of the mental or physical constitution,—or in fine were connected with any measure of supernatural influence,—it would be difficult to determine. Upon this subject, exaggerated details and fabrications of a marvellous character are to be suspected throughout the Mahometan authorities.* The following particulars it may, however, be well to record:— Character of Mahomet's ecstatic periods.

At the moment of inspiration, anxiety pressed upon the Prophet, and his countenance was troubled.† He fell to the ground like one intoxicated or overcome by sleep; and in the coldest day his forehead would be bedewed with large drops of perspiration. Even his she-camel, if Mahomet chanced to become inspired while he rode upon her, would become affected by a wild excitement, sitting down and rising up, now planting her legs rigidly, then throwing them about as if they would be parted from her. To outward appearance Inspiration Traditional account.

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prophetic period at Mecca, during which inspiration descended, lasted only *eight* years. They would thus make the former period of preliminary monitions to begin at the thirty-eighth year of the Prophet's life.

* See the *á priori* signs of inspiration given in the Introduction to the History of Ibu Khaldun,—as quoted by Sprenger, p. 111.

† *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 37½. و له كرب حي الو عليه نزل اذا ترید وجه

descended unexpectedly, and without any previous warning even to the Prophet.*

Statement Mahomet is said himself to have given of them.

When questioned on the subject Mahomet replied, "Inspiration descendeth upon me in one of two ways; sometimes Gabriel cometh and communicateth the Revelation unto me, as one man unto another, and this is easy; at other times, it affecteth me like the ringing of a bell, penetrating my very heart, and rending me as it were in pieces; and this it is which grievously afflicteth me."† In the later period of life Mahomet referred his gray hairs to the withering effect produced upon him by the "*terrific* Suras."‡

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* Abd al Rahman relates that on the return from Hodeibia (A.H. 6,) he saw the people urging on their camels. "And every one was enquiring of his neighbour the cause. And they replied, "*Inspiration hath descended on the Prophet.*" So we too urged on our camels, and reached Mahomet standing by Kira al Ghamîm. And when such numbers of the people as he desired had gathered around him, he began to recite the Fortieth Sura." *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 102½.

† There are two traditions to this effect from different sources, slightly varying in expression, but similar in purport. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 87½.

No case occurs to me in which it is represented that Mahomet was beforehand aware that the Inspiration was about to come upon him.

‡ The "terrific" Suras, as specified in the numerous traditions on this subject, are, "Sura Hûd (xi.) and its Sisters;"—the "*Sisters*" are variously given as Suras 11, 21, 56, 69, 77, 78, 81, 101;—all Meccan, and some of them very early Suras.

While Abu Bakr and Omar sat in the Mosque, at Medina, Mahomet suddenly came upon them from the door of one of his wives' houses (which opened into the mosque,) stroking and lifting up his beard, and looking at it. Now his beard had in it

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Mahometan notions regarding the Devils and Genii.

It will not have escaped observation that Tradition has represented Mahomet at one time under serious apprehensions lest the beginnings of inspiration were in reality the promptings of evil Spirits or of Genii who had taken possession of him. The views entertained by Mahometans regarding the Genii are curious, and founded upon tradition traced up to the time of Mahomet himself. Before the mission of the Prophet, the Devils and Genii, it is fancied, had access to the outskirts of Heaven, and by assiduous eaves-dropping secured some of the secrets of the upper world, which they communicated to Soothsayers and Diviners upon earth. But no sooner did Mahomet appear than they were driven from the skies, and, whenever they dared to approach, flaming bolts were hurled at them. The flaming bolts appear to mankind as falling stars. Just at this epoch the show of falling stars was consequently brilliant and uninterrupted; and the Arabs, it is said, were much alarmed at the portentious phenomenon.* Such a belief in the existence

many more white hairs than his head. And Abu Bakr said, "Ah, thou, for whom I would sacrific father and mother, white hairs are hastening upon thee!" And the Prophet raised up his beard with his hand and gazed at it; and Abu Bakr's eyes filled with tears. "Yes," said Mahomet, "Hûd, (Sura xi.) "and its Sisters, have hastened my white hairs."—"And what" asked Abu Bakr "are its sisters?" "The *Inevitable* (Sura 56,) and the *Striking* (Sura 101.") *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 84.

* *Vide Hishâmi*, pp. 45, 46; and *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 31½. It is just possible that at the period referred to, there may have been an unusually grand and numerous display of falling stars,

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and history of the Genii, childish as it may appear, is clearly developed in the Coran; and throws a mysterious light upon the inner recesses of the Prophet's mind.*

Influence of Satan considered as a possible explanation of Mahomet's belief in his own inspiration.

The early doubts of Mahomet, and his suspicion of being under the influence of Genii or Evil Spirits, suggest the enquiry whether that suspicion had in reality any true foundation, or was the mere fancy of an excited imagination. It is incumbent upon us to consider this question from a Christian point of view, and to ask whether the supernatural influence, which appears to have acted upon the soul of the Arabian Prophet, *may* not have proceeded from the Evil One and his emissaries. It is not for us to dogmatize on so recondite and mysterious a subject; but the views which Christian verity compels us to entertain regarding the Angel of darkness and his followers, would not be satisfied

which at certain periods, possibly at certain points of the earth's course, are known to be specially abundant.

* In Sura lxxii. vv. 8-10, the Genii are thus represented as conversing one with another;—"And verily we used to pry into the Heavens, but we found it to be filled with a strong guard and with flaming darts. And we used to sit in some of the seats thereof to listen; but whoever listeneth *now*, findeth a flaming bolt in ambush. And we know not whether evil be hereby intended against those upon earth, or whether the Lord be minded to guide them into the right way." When they heard Mahomet reciting the Koran, numbers of them believed. Compare also Suras xv., 17, 18; lxvii., 5; xxxvii., 6; xxvi., 210; and lxxxi., 24. The Coran is stated in some of its verses to have been revealed for the benefit and salvation *both of Men and Genii.*

without some allusion to the fearful power exercised by them, as *one at least of the possible causes* of the fall of Mahomet—the once sincere enquirer—into the meshes of deception. Assuredly, Mahomet himself lived under the deep and constant conviction of the personality of Satan and his Angels, and of his own exposure to their influence.*

Position justified by a reference to the temptation of our Saviour.

The nature of such influence, as well as its possibility, may perhaps be best illustrated by the temptation of which our blessed Saviour is related in the Gospels to have been, at the opening of his ministry, the subject. Let us endeavour briefly to follow out the parallel.

1. Temptation to minister from supernatural sources to personal wants.

In his first approach, Satan taking advantage of the cravings of hunger, tempted Jesus to contravene the Law of his human existence by supplying his temporal wants through his supernatural powers. But sternly did He throw aside the suggestion, and throughout his life appears to have ever refrained

* The following passages may be consulted on this point. Sura iv., 117; vi., 67, 113, 121; xvi., 98-100; xix., 82; xxii., 53, 54; xxiii., 99; xli., 35; xliii., 34; and cxiv., in which latter Sura the word "Whisperer" is admitted to mean the Devil. A reference to these passages will show that, in the system of Mahomet, Satan and his Angels have power to incite the wicked to evil, and even to suggest sinful thoughts and actions to the good, not excluding Mahomet himself. The doctrine of the personality of the Devil is patent from references to it throughout the Coran, especially the parts containing such statements as the account of the Fall, the Day of Judgment, description of Hell, &c.

from bringing the Divine power which He possessed to the relief of his personal wants.

Analogy in the case of Mahomet.

An analogous temptation was ever ready to entrap the footsteps of Mahomet. He, indeed, was not possessed of any inherent supernatural ability. But, as a teacher who professed himself inspired, he arrogated a spiritual power which he was continually tempted to misuse in subservience to his personal necessities and even to his erring desires. The subsequent records of his life too plainly prove that he fell into the snare.

II. Temptation to compass spiritual and lawful ends by unlawful means.

In the second scene our Lord was tempted to seek spiritual and lawful ends, by unlawful means; —to manifest his Messiahship by a vain-glorious display of supernatural energy. The object was legitimate; but the means would have involved a rash and presumptuous tempting of the Divine providence, to which his humanity owed a perfect subordination. Jesus was to advance his religion by no such unauthorized expedients;—however much it was the object of his mission, upon appropriate occasions, to display before the world the Divine glory of his nature, or show with what tremendous energy and Godlike manifestation He could have supported his teaching. "*If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the cross,*" was a suggestion from the same source; yet He descended not. It was the law of his human life to deny himself the use of that power, by which he

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could have summoned Legions to work out his plans and blast the machinations of his enemies.

Analogy in the case of Mahomet.

What a melancholy light does the comparison cast upon the career of Mahomet! *He*, it is true, owned no divine energy. But he was tempted to assume a forged weapon of fearful energy and temper by which to work out his ends. That Instrument was the NAME OF GOD. As his scheme advanced, he betook himself to other means; and sought by temporal inducements, and by the force of arms, to extend the worship of the One God. The subtile nature of the temptation was the same here as in the narrative of the Evangelists;—*to compass a pious end by unlawful means.*

III. Tempted to a compromise with evil and the world.

Again, the Devil tempted Jesus to fall down and worship him by the promise of the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. Perhaps the nature of the satanic insinuation may be thus conceived. A death struggle was at hand between the kingdom of Jesus and the world; a mortal combat, in which, through Death itself, Life was to be won for his people. To the world's end, the power of Darkness would form an awful antagonism to the power of Christianity, impeding its spread, and often recapturing its very conquests. Was it possible to compromise the struggle? Would Satan abate the fierceness of his opposition? If he were even to remain neutral, how would the contest be lightened, and what millions *more* might be brought into the

kingdom of Heaven! And this might be gained by the acknowledgment of a Power that in reality leads captive the great mass of mankind. By so slight a compromise with the spirit of the World, was it not incumbent to secure such vast and noble ends? A little concession would avoid a struggle of inconceivable anguish and loss, and with certainty secure a vast and glorious success not otherwise to be hoped for, and all tending to the honour of God. Thus would the worldling have reasoned, and thus decided. But Jesus knew of no compromise with Sin, even in its most hidden form; and, fully conscious of the fearful nature of the approaching combat, rejected the alluring offer.

Analogy in the case of Mahomet.

So did not Mahomet. He listened to the suggestion, and was tempted to seek a compromise between Religion and the World. The effect was a politico-religious system, formi[illegible] the closest combination imaginable between worl[illegible]ness and spirituality, between Good and Evil. Barely so much of virtue and of spiritual truth is retained as will appease the religious principle which exists in man, and his inward craving after the service of his Creator; while the reins of passion and indulgence are relaxed to the utmost extent compatible with the *appearance* of goodness. Mahometanism indeed presents a wonderful adaptation to fallen humanity. The spurious imitation of godliness satisfies the Serious; the laxity of its moral code, and the com-

patibility of its external observances with inner irreligion, present no barrier to the Sensualist.

Islam a compromise between religion and the world.

Whatever compromise was made by Mahomet on the one hand, the expectations held forth on the other were well fulfilled; for the Kingdoms of this world and the glory of them, followed in rapid succession in the train of Islam.

I think that I need to offer no apology for the introduction of this parallel. If we admit that our Saviour was at the commencement of his mission the subject of a direct and special temptation by the Evil one, we may safely assume that a similar combat *possibly* was waged, though with far other results, in the case of Mahomet.

If Mahomet was acted on by a supernatural guidance, his course at Medîna proves it to have been from an evil source.

Happy would it have been for the memory of the Arabian Prophet, if his career had terminated with his flight from Mecca. Then, indeed, the imputation of a compromise such as has been above supposed might, with some show of justice, have been branded as uncharitable and unwarranted. But the fruits of his principles, as exhibited *in connection with his prophetic office*, at Medîna, are of too unequivocal a character to allow a doubt that *if* he acted under a supernatural guidance, that guidance proceeded from no pure and holy source. Ambition, rapine, assassination, lust, are the undenied features of his later life, openly sanctioned by the assumed permission, sometimes even by the express command of the Most High! May we

conceive that a diabolical influence and inspiration, was permitted to enslave the heart of him who had deliberately yielded to the compromise with evil? May not Satan have beguiled the heart in the habitude of an Angel of light and, even when insinuating his vilest suggestions, have professed himself a Messenger from the God of purity and holiness? If so, what an assimilation must gradually have been wrought between the promptings of the Evil one from without, and the subjective perceptions of Mahomet within, when he could imagine, and with earnestness and sincerity assert, that the Almighty had sanctioned and even encouraged his debased appetites!

Such possibilities are suggested, not dogmatized upon.

It is enough to have suggested the awful possibility. None may venture an unhesitating reply, until there are laid bare to our view, in a more spiritual state, the workings and the manifold agencies of that unseen life which, though unceasingly active both within us and around us, remains mysteriously hid from mortal ken.

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CHAPTER FOURTH.

Extension of Islam and Early Converts, from the assumption by Mahomet of the prophetical office to the date of the first Emigration to Abyssinia.

Ætat. 44-45.

Position of Mahomet in his forty-fourth year.

THE weary region of uncertainty and speculation has been left behind. Towards the forty-fourth year of his age we find Mahomet, now emerged from doubt and obscurity, clearly and unequivocally asserting that he had been ordained a Prophet to call the Arabs to the Lord, reciting his warnings and exhortations as messages that emanated direct from the mouth of GOD, and implicitly believing (to all outward appearance) his inspiration and mission to be divine. We find him already surrounded by a little band of followers, all animated by ardent devotion to himself, and earnest belief in God as his guide and inspirer.

Earliest converts.

It is strongly corroborative of Mahomet's sincerity that the earliest converts to Islam were his bosom friends and the people of his household; who, intimately acquainted with his private life, could not fail otherwise to have detected those

discrepancies which, more or less, invariably exist between the professions of the hypocritical deceiver abroad, and his actions at home.

Khadîja. The faithful KHADÎJA has already been made known to the reader, as the sharer in the enquiries of her husband, and probably the first convert to his doctrines. "So Khadîja believed" (runs the simple tradition), "and attested the truth of that which came to him from God. Thus was the Lord minded to lighten the burden of his Prophet; for he heard nothing that grieved him touching his rejection by the people, but he had recourse unto her, and she comforted, re-assured, and supported him."*

Zeid. ZEID, the former slave, and his wife Omm Ayman (or Baraka), the nurse of Mahomet, have also been noticed. Though Zeid was now a free man, yet being the adopted son of Mahomet and his intimate friend, it is probable that he lived in close connection with his family, if not actually an ostensible member of it. He, too, was one of the earliest believers.†

Ali. The little ALI had now reached the age of thirteen or fourteen years, and already gave tokens of the wisdom and judgment which distinguished his

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* *Hishâmi*, p. 63. He promised her a palace in Paradise, formed out of a gigantic pearl, "wherein there would be neither strife nor toil."

† *Hishâmi*, p. 66.

after life. Though possessed of indomitable courage, he was meditative and reserved, and lacked the stirring energy which would have rendered him a valuable and effective propagator of Islam. He grew up from a child in the faith of Mahomet, and his earliest associations strengthened the convictions of matured age. It is said that as Mahomet was once engaged with the lad in prayer, in one of the glens near Mecca, whither they retired to avoid the jeers of their neighbours, Abu Tâlib chanced to pass by, and said to Mahomet, "My nephew! what is this new faith I see thee following?"—"Oh, my uncle! This is the religion of God, and of His angels, and of His prophets; the religion of Abraham. The Lord hath sent me an Apostle unto His servants; and thou, my uncle, art the most worthy of all that I should address my invitation unto, and the most worthy to assist the Prophet of the Lord." Abu Tâlib replied, "I am not able, my nephew, to separate from the religion and the customs of my forefathers, but I swear that so long as I live, no one shall dare to trouble thee." Then, turning to his son, the little Ali, who had professed a similar faith and the resolution to follow Mahomet, he said, "Well, my son, he will not invite thee to aught but that which is good; wherefore thou art free to cleave unto him."*

* *Hishâmi*, p. 66; *Tabari*, p. 108. This conversation, like most of the stories of the period, is of a type moulded by subse-

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Waraca. To the family group it is hardly necessary to add the aged cousin of Khadîja, WARACA, whose profession of Christianity and support of Mahomet have been already mentioned; because it is agreed by all that he died before Mahomet had entered upon his *public* ministry.

Abu Bakr. In the little circle there was on belonging to another branch of the Coreish, who, after Khadîja, may claim precedence in conversion to Islam. ABU BAKR, of the Bani Taym, had long been a familiar friend of Mahomet; with him he probably had lamented the gross darkness of Mecca, and sought after a better faith. He lived in the same quarter of the city as Khadîja.* When Mahomet removed thither the intimacy became closer, and the attachment of Abu Bakr was soon rivetted by implicit faith in his friend as the apostle of God. Ayesha, his daughter (born about this period, and destined while yet a girl to be the Prophet's bride), "could not remember the time when both her parents

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quent Mahometan ideas. The tale has however been admitted into the text because in itself not improbable. The facts are at any rate in accordance with Abu Tâlib's character, and his constant support of Mahomet.

* Both Abu Bakr and Khadîja lived in the quarter now called *Zuckâck al Hajar*. See the plan of Mecca in chap. ii. p. 5. This street "comprises the birth place of Fâtima, the daughter of Mahommed, and of Abu Bakr, the Prophet's successor." *Burkhardt's Travels*, p. 126.

were not true believers,* and when Mahomet did not daily visit her father's house morning and evening."† Of Abu Bakr, the Prophet said, "I never invited any to the faith who displayed not hesitation and perplexity—excepting only Abu Bakr; who, when I had propounded unto him Ilsam, tarried not, neither was perplexed."‡

His appearance and character.

The character and appearance of this Chief of Islam, and bosom friend of Mahomet, demand a detailed description. Abu Bakr was about two years years younger than the Prophet; short in stature, and of a small spare frame; the eyes deeply seated under a high projecting forehead. His complexion was fair, and his face thin, so that you could see the veins upon it.§ Shrewd and intelligent, he yet wanted the originality of genius; his nature

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* *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 211½. Asmâ, Ayesha's sister (but by another mother) is related to have said the same thing of her father, Abu Bakr. *Ibid.*

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Hishâmi*, p. 67.

§ This description is from the Kâtib al Wâckidi. It must, however, be remembered (as has already been remarked in the case of Mahomet, *vide* chap. ii. p. 15,) that the personal details preserved by tradition are those of his later life. The "loosely hanging clothes" and "flaccid hips," described by the Secretary, were probably not characteristic of his manhood, and have therefore not been adopted in the text. He had little hair on his body; the joints of his fingers were small and fine. At the emigration to Medîna, his hair was the whitest among Mahomet's followers; but he used to dye it.

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was mild and sympathetic, but not incapable of firm purpose where important interests were concerned. Impulse and passion rarely prompted his actions; he was guided by reason and calm conviction. Faithful and unvarying in his attachment to the Prophet, he was known (and is to the present day familiar throughout the realms of Islam), as AL SADÎCK, "*the True.*"* He was also styled *Al Awwâh*, "the Sighing," from his tender and compassionate heart.

His generosity and popularity.

Abu Bakr was a diligent and successful merchant, and being frugal and simple in his habits, possessed at his conversion about 40,000 dirhems. His generosity was rare, his charity unwearying. The greater part of his fortune was expended in the purchase of such unfortunate slaves as from their inclination to the new faith were persecuted by the unbelieving Meccans; so that but 5,000 dirhems were left when, ten or twelve years after, he emi-

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* Some say he was so called because he bore testimony to the truth of Mahomet's heavenly journey. He was called also *Al Atîck* from his handsome countenance (*Hish.* p. 67); or because Mahomet so named him as one preserved from hell-fire, *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 211½. His proper name was Abdallah, son of Othmân Abu Cahâfa. It is not clear when he obtained the name of *Abu Bakr*. If, as appears probable, it was given him because his daughter Ayesha was Mahomet's only virgin bride بكر then it could not have been till after the emigration to Medîna, when the Prophet, by marrying many *widows*, had given a distinction and peculiarity to his marriage with Ayesha.

grated with the Prophet to Medina. Abu Bakr was unusually familiar with the history of the Coreish, who often referred to him for genealogical information. His judgment was calm and impartial, his conversation agreeable, his demeanour affable and engaging; his society and advice were therefore much sought after by the Coreish, and he was popular throughout the city.*

Abu Bakr's influence gains five early converts;

To gain such a man as a staunch adherent of his claims was for Mahomet a most important step. Abu Bakr's influence was freely surrendered to the cause of Islam, and five of the earliest converts are attributed to his exertions and example. Three were but striplings. *Sáad*, the son of Abu Wackkâs, converted in his sixteenth or seventeenth year, was the nephew of Amina.† *Zobeir*, son of Al Awwâm,

Sáad, Zobeir, Talha.

* The authorities for these details of Abu Bakr are *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, pp. 211½-215; *Hishâmi*, p. 67; *Tabari*, p. 112. Sprenger (pp. 170, 171,) has ably and faithfully drawn his character. I quite agree with him in considering "the faith of Abu Bakr the greatest guarantee of the sincerity of Mohammed in the beginning of his career;"—and, indeed, in a modified sense, throughout his life.

† The mother of Mahomet. See *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, pp. 205-207½. Sáad pursued at Mecca the trade of manufacturing arrows. He died at Al Ackîck, ten Arabian miles from Medina, (whither they carried him for burial,) A.H. 50 or 55, aged about seventy. These dates would make him still younger at the period of conversion than is represented by the Secretary. But throughout this stage we must bear in mind that (according to Canon II. c. Introduction, chap. i. p. lxii.) the tendency of tradition is to

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probably still younger, was at once the nephew of Khadîja, and the son of Mahomet's aunt Safia.* About the same age was *Talha*, the renowned warrior of after days, and related to Abu Bakr himself.†

Othmân son of Affân, and Abd al Rahmân.

The fourth was *Othmân* son of Affân (successor of Abu Bakr and Omar in the Caliphate), who,

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place the conversion of the leaders of Islam *earlier* than it actually occurred. It is therefore not improbable that Sáad's conversion may have taken place a few years later than the period referred to in the text; or, occurring at the period specified, he may have died more advanced in years than is admitted by tradition.

* Zobeir was the grandson of Khuweilid, Khadîja's father. He was also the grandson of Abd al Muttalib by his daughter Safia. He was assassinated, A.H. 36, aged sixty-four, according to others sixty-seven. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, pp. 197½-200. He was a butcher; and his father a grain merchant or, as others have it, a tailor.

† Talha, son of Obeidalla was a Coreishite, of the Bani Taym. His grandfather was a brother of the grand-father of Abu Bakr. He was killed in the battle of the Camel, A.D. 36, aged sixty-two or sixty-four. He would thus be, at the period referred to in the text, fifteen or sixteen years old. The Kâtib al Wâckidi tells an absurd story that when at Bostra with a caravan, a monk enquired of them whether "Ahmed had yet appeared at Mecca"—"And who is *Ahmed?*" they asked. "He is the son of Abdallah, the son of Abd al Muttalib," replied the monk; "this is the month in which he is to arise; and he will emigrate from Mecca to the country of date trees, and the stony salt land (Medîna). Ye should haste away to meet him!" Talha set forth at once for Mecca, and was told on his arrival that Mahomet had put forward prophetical claims, and that Abu Bakr had declared for him. So Talha believed, and accompanied Abu Bakr to Mahomet, and the Prophet rejoiced when he heard the story of the Monk.

though of the Ommeyad stock, was a grandson by his mother of Ab al Muttalib. Rockeya, being now, or shortly after, free from her connection with Otba, the son of the hostile Abu Lahab, Mahomet gave her in marriage to Othmân, whose wife she continued until her death some ten or twelve years afterwards. Othmân was at this period between thirty and forty years of age.* The fifth was *Abd*

Talha may *possibly* have heard some Syrian monk speak of the evil of idolatry &c., and been thus *prepared* to follow Mahomet's doctrine. But the details of the story as given by the Secretary are too absurd to need refutation.

Nowfal, a brother of Khadîja, persecuted Abu Pakr and Talha, and bound them together with a rope, whence they received the name of *Al Caranein*, "the Bound." *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 220½; *Hishâmi*, p. 75. The latter authority calls Nowfal one of the *devils* of the Coreish;—the former calls him their *lion*. He was killed at Badr.

* The account given by the Kâtib al Wâckidi of Othmân's conversion is that he and Talha followed Zobeir into the house of Mahomet, who propounded to them the principles of Islam, and recited the Coran; whereupon they believed. And Othmân said, "Oh Prophet! I have come lately from Syria, and as I was asleep on the way between Al Mâân and Al Zurcka, one cried to me, *Arise, thou sleeper! Verily, Ahmed hath appeared at Mecca*; so we arrived, and forthwith heard the tidings of thee." This is of a piece with the story of Talha,—the one probably invented to rival the other.

Othmân was early exposed to persecution. His uncle, Al Hakam, grandson of Omeyd, seized and bound him, saying, "Dost thou prefer a new religion to that of thy fathers? I swear I will not loose thee until thou givest up this new faith thou art following after." Othman said;—"By the Lord, I will never abandon it!" So when Al Hakam saw his firmness in the faith, he let him go. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 189.

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al Rahmân, son of Awf, of the Bani Zohra,* about ten years younger than the Prophet, and a man of wealth and character. Abd al Rahmân, Othmân, and Talha were, like Abu Bakr, merchants or traders; and the pursuit of the same profession may have occasioned community of interest among them.

Four converts with Abd al Rahmân.

Abd al Rahmân is said to have been accompanied on his first visit to the house of Mahomet by four companions, who simultaneously with him embraced Islam; *Obeida*, son of Mahomet's uncle, Hârith;† *Abu Salma*, of the Bani Makhzûm;‡ *Abu Obeida*, son of Al Jarrâh, subsequently a warrior of note;§ and *Othmân*, son of Matzûn. It is related that the latter had already abandoned wine before his conversion, and was with difficulty persuaded by Mahomet to renounce the asperities of an ascetic life.§ The family of Othmân appear to have been

Othmân, son of Matzûn.

He was subsequently called Abu Abdallah, after a son by Rockeya; when about six years of age, this child had his eye pecked out by a bird, fell sick, and died, A.H. 4.

Having succeeded Abu Bakr in the Caliphate, he was murdered, A.H. 36, aged seventy-five (or according to others) eighty-two, which would make him at the time of the emigration to Medina, thirty-nine or forty-six years of age; and at the period under consideration from thirty to thirty-five.

* The same tribe as that of Amina the mother of Mahomet.

† Obeida was killed at Badr: he was ten years older than Mahomet. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 188.

‡ He emigrated twice to Abyssinia with his wife *Omm Salma*. He was wounded at the battle of Ohod, and died shortly after, when Mahomet married his widow. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 225½.

§ *Ibid.* p. 261.

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well inclined to Islam, for we find two brothers, a son, and other relatives of his in the list of early believers.*

Converted slaves. *Bilâl.*

Of the slaves ransomed by Abu Bakr from persecution, for their adherence to the new doctrine, the foremost is BILÂL, the son of an Abyssinian slave girl. He was tall, dark, and gaunt, with negro features and bushy hair. Mahomet honoured and distinguished him as "*the first-fruits of Abyssinia*;" and to this day he is renowned throughout the Moslem world as the first Müadzzin, or crier to prayer.† *Amr ibn Foheira*, after being purchased and released from severe trial, was employed by Abu Bakr in tending his flocks.‡ *Abdallah ibn Masûd*, "small

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* He belonged to the Coreshite stock of the Bani Jumh. He wished to renounce the privileges of conjugal life. But Mahomet forbade this, and recommended him to imitate his own practice in this respect, saying that the Lord had not sent His prophet with a monkish faith. *Ibid.* p. 258. The particulars which Mahomet is there represented as stating regarding his own habits are strongly illustrative of his character; but the grossness of language and idea which pervades the passage precludes farther detail.

* His brothers were Abdallah and Cudâma. His son emigrated to Abyssinia. Mumir, another Jumhite, is also mentioned as converted at this stage. The *whole* family of Othmân ibn Matzûn, with their wives and children, emigrated to Medîna at the Hegira.

† He belonged to the Bani Jumh *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 224.

‡ A son (by a former husband) of Abu Bakr's wife (the mother of Ayesha) was his owner. *Ibid.* p. 223½.

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in body, but weighty in faith," constant attendant of Mahomet at Medîna;* and *Khobâb*, son of Aratt, a blacksmith, were also converted at this period.† The slaves of Mecca were peculiarly accessible to the solicitations of the Prophet. As foreigners they were generally familiar either with Judaism or Christianity. Isolated from the influences of hostile partizanship, persecution alienated them from the Coreish, and misfortune made their hearts susceptible of spiritual impressions.‡

Meccan slaves susceptible of religious impression.

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* He belonged to the Bani Tamim; and was attached to the Bani Zohra, but whether in the capacity of an attendant or confederate is not stated. He was once at Medîna climbing up a date tree, and his companions were indulging in pleasantry at the expense of his spare legs, when Mahomet used the expression quoted in the text. He was sallow, with his hair smoothed down. *Ibid.* p. 207½. On what authority Weil (p. 50) calls him a *dwarf*, "der Zwerg," is not stated.

† Khobâb was of the Bani Tamîm, having been sold as a prisoner at Mecca to Omm Anmâr (or Omm Sibâ), whose trade (*Mulier quae feminas circumcidit*) was so offensively proclaimed at Ohod by Hamza, when he challenged her son Sibâ. It is related of Khobâb that when he claimed a debt from Al As ibn Wâil, the latter, who was a denier of the resurrection, deferred him ironically for payment to the judgment day. *Ibid.* p. 210½.

‡ Sprenger says, "The excitement among the slaves, when Mahomet first assumed his office, was so great that Abdallah ibn Jodâân, who had one hundred of these sufferers, found it necessary to remove them from Mecca, lest they should all become converts," p. 159. This, however, appears to be an exaggerated statement, as well as that preceding it, *viz.*, that "two of them died as martyrs." There is no good evidence of there having been any martyr *before* the Hegira. The only case of martyrdom alleged by early authority during that period, will be considered below.

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Thirteen other early believers.

In addition to the twenty persons who have now been noticed as among the first confessors of the new faith, the Kâtib al Wâckidi enumerates at least thirteen others as having believed "*before the entry of the Prophet into the house of Arcam;*"—by which expression the biographers mark the few earliest years of Islam. Among these thirteen we observe the youthful son *Sâîd*,* and several of the relatives of the aged enquirer Zeid, who was already some time dead, but whose remarkable life has been above alluded to as possibly paving the way for Mahomet. The wife of Sâîd, *Fâtima*, a cousin of the same family, and her brother *Zeid*, son of Khattâb,† were likewise among the early converts. There was also among the number *Obeidallah*, son of Jahsh, himself one of the "Four enquirers." On the persecution becoming hot, he emigrated with his wife Omm Habîba (subsequently married to Mahomet), and

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* *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 255.½ He died A.H. 50 or 51, aged above seventy; so that at this period he was little more than a boy.

† *Ibid.* 254½. He was an elder brother of the famous Omar. *Khuneis*, the husband of Omar's daughter Hafsa, was also at this date a believer. He was one of the emigrants to Abyssinia. He died about two years after the Hegîra, when Mahomet married his widow. *Ibid.* p. 257½. Wâckidi, a confederate of the same family (*Ibid.*), and Amir ibn Rabia the freed man and adopted son of Khattâb (Omar's father), are likewise among the earliest converts. The latter shortly after emigrated with his wife to Abyssinia. *Ibid.* p. 256¾. These facts show the close connection between the family and relatives of the "Enquirer" Zeid, and the new religion.

others of his family, to Abyssinia, where he was converted to Christianity, and died in that faith.* It is interesting to note among these converts *Abu Hodzeifa*,† son of Otba, the father-in-law of Abu Sofiân, a family inveterately opposed to Mahomet. We find also the name of *Arcam*, whose house will shortly be mentioned as memorable in the annals of Islam.‡

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* Obeidallah was Mahomet's cousin by his mother Omeima daughter of Abd al Muttalib. He belonged to the Bani Dûdân, a collateral branch of the Coreish. Two of his brothers, Abdallah and Abu Ahmed, were also converted "before the entry into Arcam's house." He was the brother of the famous Zeinab, who was married to Zeid, Mahomet's freedman, and was afterwards divorced by him that the Prophet himself might take her to wife.

The whole family of the Bani Dûdân were very favourable to Islam; for it is related that at the Hegira they all emigrated to Medîna, men, women and children, locking up their houses. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 195½. It is remarkable that this tribe were *confederates* of Harb and Abu Sofiân, the opponents of Mahomet;—the influence of Islam thus frequently over-leaping and baffling political combinations of Mecca.

† *Ibid.* p. 194½. He challenged his father at Badr to single combat. His sister Hind (wife of Abu Sofiân) retorted in satirical verses, taunting him with his squint, and with the barbarity of offering to fight with his father. He was an ill-favoured man, with projecting teeth. He twice fled to Abyssinia with the Moslem emigrants, and his wife Sahla there bore him a son whom he called Muhammad.

‡ Arcam belonged to the Bani Makhzûm. Besides the above, the following are noted by the Kâtib al Wâckidi as converts before the entry into Arcam's house. *Khâlid ibn Sâid* and his brother *Amr*. They emigrated to Abyssinia, the former with his wife Hamaniya; *Tabari*, p. 113. Sprenger (p. 172) makes Khâlid the

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Besides this early group of three-and-thirty individuals, the wives and daughters of some of the converts are mentioned as faithful and earnest professors of Islam.* It is, indeed, in conformity with the analogy of religious movements in all ages, that women should take a forward part, if not in direct and public acts of assistance, yet in the encouragement and exhortation which are perhaps of even greater value. On the other hand, in esti- Several female converts.

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fifth convert; but there si so great a tendency in each party and family vain-gloriously to represent its own leaders or ancestors as the earliest believers, that little dependance can be placed on such assertions of priority. *Hâtib ibn Amr* (of the Bani Amr ibn Lowey) was a convert of the same stage. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 260.

Two others descended from families allied to the Coreish, *Amr ibn Abasa*, and *Abu Dzarr Ghifâri*, are also said to have been converted at this period, but to have left Mahomet and returned to their tribes. They rejoined Mahomet after the retreat of the Meccans from the siege of Medîna. The accounts however are so vague and unlikely as to lead to the suspicion that they were imagined or fabricated by descendants who wished to assume for their families a precedence in the faith.

* The following are mentioned by Hishâmi, p. 68;—*Fâtima*, wife of Sâîd, already noticed in the text: *Asmâ* and *Ayesha*, daughters of Abu Bakr; (the latter, however, if actually born, could have been only an infant at this period): *Asma*, wife of Ayâsh ibn Abi Rabia: *Asma*, wife of Jáfar Mahomet's cousin; *Fâtima*, wife of Hâtib, mentioned in the preceding note: *Fokeîha*, wife of Hattâb, his brother: *Ramlah*, wife of Muttalib ibn Azhar: *Amina*, wife of Khâlid, noticed in the last note. Some of these indeed (as Ayesha) belong to later dates. But it is probable also that the list is incomplete. The depreciative notions of feminine worth current in the east lead the Biographers chiefly to mention the women only in connection with their more famous husbands, fathers, or brothers.

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mating the number of the early converts, we must not forget that their ranks have been unduly swelled by the traditions of those whose piety or ambition have imagined or invented a priority in the faith for their own ancestors or patrons. Weighing both considerations, we shall not greatly err if we conclude that, in the first three or four years after the assumption by Mahomet of his prophetic office, the converts to his faith amounted to nearly forty souls.

Converts during the first three or four years estimated at forty.

By what degrees, under the influence of what motives or arguments, and at what precise periods, these individuals, one by one, gave in their adhesion to the claims of Mahomet, we can scarcely determine, farther than has been done in the general outline already before the reader. It is usual among traditionists to assign to the Prophet three years of secret preaching and private solicitation, after which an open call was made to the Coreish at large. But we hardly find grounds for this theory when we bring it to the surer test of the Coran. It is probable that the preliminary term of doubt and enquiry, which we sought to trace in the preceding chapter, has been confounded by tradition with the actual assumption of the prophetic office. The truth we may conjecture to be as follows. An interval of pious musing, and probably of expostulation with others, preceded the fortieth year of Mahomet's life. About that year the resolution to "recite" in God's

Steps by which this success was attained.

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name (in other words, the *conviction of inspiration*), was fully adopted. For some succeeding period his efforts would be naturally directed to individual persuasion and entreaty; but there is nothing to warrant the belief that the prophetic claim, once assumed, was ever confined within the limits of a narrow circle, or held a secret not to be divulged to the people of Mecca. It was after this that the Prophet received (as he imagined) the command to "preach:"* and forthwith his appeal was made to the whole community of Mecca. Gradually

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* That is Sura lxxiv. Mahometan biographers refer to Sura xxvi. v. 213, as the first call to preach. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, pp. 13 and 88; *Tabari*, p. 114. The latter passage is as follows:—

> And preach to thy more near kinsfolk.
> And lower thy wing to the believers that follow thee.
> And if they rebel against thee, &c.

The tradition that the passage, Sura xxvi., v. 213, was the first call to preach, (*Kâtib al Wâckidi*, pp. 13 and 88; *Tabari*, p. 114) appears entirely erroneous. That verse is not only contained in a late Sura, but itself bears evidence of persecution, of development, and of believers already numerous. It was probably revealed while the Prophet with his relatives was shut up in the "Sheb" or Quarter of Abu Tâlib, as will be related in the next chapter, and while his preaching was necessarily confined to them.

The stories also of the Prophet taking his stand upon Mount Safa, summoning his relatives family by family, and addressing to them the divine message; of the contemptuous reply of Abu Lahab (see above, p. 80, note †); of the miraculous dinner at which Mahomet propounded his claim to his relatives, Ali alone standing forth as his champion and "Vizier," &c. are all apoc-

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his followers increased, and the faith of each (though little more than the reflection of *his own* conviction) was accepted by Mahomet as a new and independent evidence of his mission, emanating from Him who alone can turn the heart. Success made the sphere of Islam to expand before him: and that which was primarily intended for Mecca and Arabia alone, soon embraced, in the ever-widening circle of its call, the whole human race.

Persecution caused by the attachment of the people to the national idolatry.

An important change now occurred in the relations of Mahomet with the citizens of Mecca. Their hostility was aroused, and believers were subjected to persecution and indignity. The main ground of this opposition was simply an hereditary attachment to the established system of idolatry. There was no antagonism of a privileged caste, or of a priesthood supported by the temple;—no "craftsmen of Diana" deriving their livelihood from the shrine. But there was the universal and deep-seated affection for practices associated from infancy with the life of the Meccan, and the proud devotion to a system which made his city the foremost in

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ryphal, and owe their origin to the above or other similar passages in the Coran which it was desired to illustrate, or to Aly-ite prepossessions. See some of these accounts in Tabari, pp. 115-118. At the miraculous dinner, food was prepared hardly sufficient for one person, but served to their content for a company of forty.

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all Arabia. These advantages he would not lightly abandon.

Weakness of Mahomet's position.

Whether the idolatry of Mecca would not have succumbed without a struggle before such preaching as Mahomet's, *sustained by reasonable evidence*, may be matter for speculation. That which now imparted to the national faith strength and obstinacy was the equally weak position of its unexpected antagonist. Amidst the declamation and rhetoric of the Arabian Prophet there was absolutely no proof whatever (excepting his own convictions) advanced in support of the divine commission. Idolatry might be wrong, but what guarantee had the idolater that Islam was not equally fallacious? This was the sincere, and for many years the invincible objection of the Meccans; and the conviction, though no doubt mingled with hatred and jealousy, and degenerating often into intolerance and cruel spite, was the real spring of their long-sustained opposition.

Advantages accruing from this opposition to the cause of Mahomet.

Persecution, though it may sometimes have deterred the timid from joining his ranks, was eventually of unquestionable service to Mahomet. It furnished a plausible excuse for casting aside the garb of toleration; for opposing force to force against those who "obstructed the ways of the Lord;" and at last for the compulsory conversion of unbelievers. Even before the Hegira it forced the adherents of the Prophet in self-defence into a closer union, and made them stand forth with a bolder

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aim and more resolute front. The severity and injustice of the Meccans, overshooting the mark, aroused personal and family sympathies; unbelievers sought to avert or to mitigate the sufferings of the followers of the Prophet, and in so doing were sometimes themselves gained over to his side.*

Period at which it commenced.

It was not, however, till three or four years of his ministry had elapsed, that any general opposition was organized against Mahomet. Even after he had begun publicly to preach, and his followers had multiplied, the Coreish did not gainsay his doctrine. They would only point slightingly at him as he passed, and say:—*There goeth the Man of the children of Abd al Muttalib, to speak unto the people about the Heavens.* But, adds tradition, when the Prophet began to abuse their idols, and to assert the perdition of their ancestors who had all died in unbelief, then they became displeased and began to treat him with contumely.†

Once formed it grew rapidly.

Hostility, once excited, soon showed itself in acts of violence. Sáad, it is related, having retired for prayer with a group of believers to one of the valleys near Mecca, some of his neighbours passed unexpectedly by. A sharp contention arose between them, followed by blows. Sáad struck one of his

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* The conversion of Hamza is in point. He was led (as we shall see in the following chapter,) to embrace Islam through indignation at the abuse bestowed by Abu Jahl upon Mahomet.

† *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 38; *Hishâmi*, p. 69; *Tabari*, p. 120.

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opponents with a camel goad; and this, they say, was "the first blood shed in Islam."*

Mahomet occupies, for the purpose of his mission, the house of Arcam, A.D. 613.

It was probably about this time,—the fourth year of his mission,—that, in order to prosecute his endeavours peaceably and without interruption, Mahomet took possession of the house of Arcam, (a convert already noticed,) situated a short distance to the south of his own dwelling, upon the gentle rise of Safâ. Fronting the Kaaba to east, it was in a frequented position; and all pilgrims, in the prescribed walk between Safa and Marwa, must needs pass often before it.† Thither were conducted all who began to show any leaning towards Islam, and there Mahomet expounded to them his way more perfectly. Thus of one and another of the be-

* *Hishâmi*, p. 70; *Tabari*, p. 114. The story is not given by Wâckidi, and is open to some suspicion. Sáad is famous as "the first who shot an arrow" in the Mussulman wars. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 98¼-205¼. His friends, desirous to go a little farther and show that he was the first also to *shed blood* for Islam, may have supposed, magnified, or invented this tale.

† The house possesses so peculiar an interest in the earliest annals of Islam, that I will here note the particulars given regarding it by the Secretary of Wâckidi, p. 226.

و كانت دار بمكه على الصفا و هى الدار التى كان النبى فيها فى اول الاسلام و فيها دعا الناس الى الاسلام و اسلم فيها قوم كثير*

‡ "The house of Arcam at Mecca was on Safâ, the same which the Prophet occupied in the beginning of Islam. In it he invited the people to Islam. And a great multitude believed therein."

In after days, Arcam devoted it to the divine service in a deed which Wâckidi himself saw, and of which the following extract

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Conversions there.

lievers, it is recorded that "he was converted after the entry into the house of Arcam, and the preaching there;"—or, that "he was brought unto Mahomet in the house of Arcam, and the Prophet recited

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contains a copy;— ودعيت دار الارقم دار الاسلام و تصدق بها الارقم على ولده فقرات نسخه صدقه الارقم بداره بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم هذا ما قضى الرقم فى ربعه ما حاز الصفا انها محرمه بمكانها من الحرم لا تباع و لا تورث *

"And the house of Arcam was called *the house of Islam;* and Arcam devoted it (to God) under the trust of his children; and I (Wâckidi) read the document of consecration, as follows;—*In the name of the Lord, the Compassionate, the Merciful:—this is what Arcam hath determined regarding the house which bordereth upon Safâ, that it is devoted, as a part of the sacred place. It shall not be sold, neither shall it be inherited. Witnessed by Hishâm ibn al As and his freedman.*"

The descendants of Arcam continued to possess the house, either occupying it themselves, or taking rent for it, until the Caliphate of Abu Jáfar. When Mohammad, Hasan's grandson, rebelled in Medîna, Abdallah the grandson of Arcam sided with him, and Abu Jáfar caused him to be put in prison and in irons. Then the Caliph sent a message to Abdallah, now above eighty years of age, promising him a full pardon if he would sell him the house of Arcam. Abdallah objected that it was devoted property;—but at last, partly through intimidation, partly tempted by the large price, he sold his share in it for 17,000 dinars; and his relatives did likewise. Thus it became the property of the Caliph. Afterwards Mahdî gave it to Kheizaran (the slave girl, mother of Mûsâ and Hârûn,) who enlarged it. And it was called after her name. *Ibid.*

There is nothing to show clearly on what footing Mahomet occupied this building;—whether continuously with his family, or only as a place of retreat where, sheltered from the observation and annoyances of the Meccans, he could pursue his teaching unmolested. From several incidental notices of converts remaining there concealed during the day, and slipping away in the evening, the latter appears to be the more probable view.

Omar, who was converted at the close of the 6th year of Mahomet's mission, is said to have been the last who was brought

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the Coran unto him, and explained the doctrines of Islam, and he was converted and embraced the faith." So famous was it as the birth-place of conversion, that it was afterwards styled *the House of Islam.** Four sons of Abul Bokeir, a confederate of the family of Khattâb, were the first to believe, and "*swear allegiance to Mahomet*," in this house.† Hence we may conclude that, although Omar, son of Khattâb, was not yet converted, the leaven of the new doctrine was doubtless spreading rapidly among his connections.

Converts among the connexions of Omar, son of Khattâb.

The story of *Musáb* ibn Omeir, a great grandson of Hâshim, will illustrate some of the obstacles to the progress of Islam. His wife was a sister of Obeidalla son of Jahsh,‡ and it was probably

Story of Musâb;

to this house. Tradition states that the male converts had then reached the number of forty; and that they quitted the house of Arcam because the influence of Omar enabled them to dispense with secrecy. *v. Ibn Hajar, p.* 49.

* Dâr ul Islâm;— دار الاسلام

† Abul Bokeir was descended from Kinâna through an off-shoot more ancient than the Coreish. This family is included among the Dûdân branch, which emigrated *en masse* to Medîna at the Hegira. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, pp. 196, 256½.

The remarkable expression in the text is the same as that for doing homage or swearing fealty to a Leader or Chief. "Ackil and his three brothers were converted in the house of Arcam, and they were the first to swear allegiance to Mahomet therein;"— و هم اول من بايع رسول الله فيها The "swearing allegiance to Mahomet" was probably a general declaration of faith and submission to his teaching. Possibly it may have been only the retrospective application by the traditionists of an after practice and phrase to a period when as yet there was no actual *homage* done to Mahomet.

‡ Before noticed, at p. 109, as a convert who embraced Christianity in Abyssinia.

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through the influence of her family that he visited the house of Arcam, listened to the exhortations of Mahomet, and embraced his doctrine. But he feared publicly to confess the change; for his tribe, and his mother who doated upon him, (and through whose fond attention he was noted as the most handsomely dressed youth in Mecca), were inveterately opposed to Mahomet. His conversion being at last noised abroad, his family seized and kept him in durance; but he escaped, and proceeded to Abyssinia with the first Moslem emigrants. When he returned from thence, he had become so altered and wretched that his mother had not the heart to abuse him. At a latter period, having been deputed by Mahomet to teach the converts at Medîna, he revisited Mecca in company with them. His mother was apprised of his arrival, and sent to him saying:—"Ah, disobedient son! wilt thou enter a city in which thy mother dwelleth, and not first visit her?" "Nay, verily," he replied "I shall never visit the house of any one before the Prophet of God." So, after he had greeted and conferred with Mahomet, he went to his mother, who thus accosted him:—"Well! I suppose thou art still a renegade." He answered,—"I follow the Prophet of the Lord, and the true faith of Islam." "Art thou then well satisfied with the miserable way thou hast fared in the land of Abyssinia, and now again at Yathreb?" But he perceived that she was meditating his imprisonment, and exclaimed,—"What! wilt thou

force a man from his religion? If ye seek to confine me, I will assuredly slay the first person that layeth hands upon me." His mother said;—"Then depart from my presence," and she began to weep. Musáb was moved and said;—"Oh, my mother! I give thee affectionate counsel. Testify that there is no god but the Lord, and that Mahomet is his servant and messenger." And she replied; "By the sparkling Stars!* I shall never make a fool of myself by entering into thy religion. I wash my hands of thee and thy concerns, and cleave steadfastly unto mine own faith."†

and of Tuleib.

There were social causes on the other hand to aid the spread of the new doctrine. These may be exemplified (though we anticipate a year or two) by the conversion of Tuleib a maternal cousin of Mahomet.‡ This young man having been gained over in the house of Arcam, went to his mother and told her that he now believed in the true God, and followed his Prophet. She replied that he did very right in assisting his cousin; "And, by the Lord!" she added, "if I had strength to do that

* و الثواقب —Compare Sura lxxxvi. 3, where a similar oath will be found * و السماء و الطارق * و ما ادراك ما الطارق * النجم الثاقب

† *Kâtib al Wâckidi* p. 201 *et seq.* Musáb was killed at Ohod, where he displayed a valour and contempt of suffering almost incredible.

‡ His mother was Orwa, daughter of Abd al Muttalib. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 202½.

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which men do, I would myself defend and protect him." "But, my mother! what hindereth thee from believing and following him? And truly thy brother Hamza hath believed." She replied, "I wait to see what my sisters do. I shall verily be like unto them." "But, I beseech thee, mother, by the Lord! wilt thou not go unto him and salute him, and testify thy faith?" And she did so; and thenceforward she assisted the cause of Mahomet by her speech, and by stirring up her sons to aid him and to fulfil his commands.*

Further slave converts.

Shortly after Mahomet began to occupy the house of Arcam, several slaves allied themselves to him. Of these, *Yasâr* and *Jabr*, are mentioned, by the commentators of the Coran, as the parties accused by the Coreish of instructing the Prophet. The latter was the Christian servant of a family from Hadhramaut, and the Prophet is said to have sat much at his cell.† The former, better known

* Tuleib was killed in the battle of Ajnadein A.H. 13, aged thirty-five. At the period of his conversion, say in the sixth or seventh year of Mahomet's mission, he would be about sixteen years of age. He went to Abyssinia in the second emigration, but nothing notable is related of him in after life.

† *Hishâmi*, p. 125; *Sprenger*, p. 162. He must have died before the emigration to Medîna, as we do not hear anything farther of him. The imputation of *learning* from Jabr is probably of a later date than the events in this chapter; for in the Suras given forth at the present period there was scarcely any mention of the Sacred Scriptures.

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under the name of Abu Fokeiha,* was subjected to great persecution, but probably died some time before the Hegira. His daughter Fokeiha was married to Hattâb, a convert, whom we find with others of his family among the subsequent emigrants to Abyssinia.† Yasâr, or Abu Fokeiha.

A more important convert, styled by Mahomet "the first fruits of Greece," was *Suheib* son of Sinân. His home was at Mousal, or some neighbouring Mesopotamian village. His father, or his uncle, had been the Persian governor of Obolla. A Grecian band made an incursion into Mesopotamia, and carried him off while yet a boy to Syria, perhaps to Constantinople. Bought afterwards by a party of the Bani Kalb, he was sold at Mecca to Abdalla ibn Jodâân, who gave him freedom, and took him under his protection. A fair and very ruddy complexion marked his northern birth, and broken Suheib.

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* Dr. Sprenger, (*Ibid.*) seems to have overlooked this, when he states that "the name of Yasâr does not appear among the followers" of Mahomet. He is frequently mentioned as one of the converts who suffered most severely in the early persecutions. See *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 227. We do not find him noticed in the later history, and hence may conclude that he died at Mecca during this period.

† Hattâb (see above, p. 8), Hâtib, and Mumir, are mentioned by Hishâmi (whom Sprenger follows), as sons of Hârith, of the Bani Jumh. The Kâtib al Wâckidi assigns this genealogy to Mumir (p. 259½), but makes Hâtib and Hattâb to be sons of Amr, of an entirely different tribe, the Bani Amir ibn Lowey (p. 260).

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Arabic betrayed a Grecian education. By traffic he acquired considerable wealth at Mecca; but having embraced Islam, and being left by the death of Abdalla without a patron, he suffered much at the hands of the unbelieving Coreish. It is probable that Mahomet gained some knowledge of Christianity from him, and he may be the same to whom the Meccans at a latter period referred as the source of his Scriptural information;—*and indeed* WE *know that they say*, VERILY A CERTAIN MAN TEACHETH HIM. *But the tongue of him whom they intend is foreign, whereas this Revelation is in pure Arabic.** At the general emigration to Medîna, the people of Mecca endeavoured to prevent Suheib's departure; but he bargained to relinquish the whole of his property, if they would let him go free. Mahomet, when he heard of it, exclaimed;—*Suheib, verily, hath made a profitable bargain.*†

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* *Sura* xvi. p. 103, which is one of the latest Meccan Suras. The same imputation will be found in Suras of a somewhat earlier date; as Sura xliv. p. 4; xxv. p. 4.

The family of Suheib maintained that he fled from Constantinople to Mecca after reaching the years of maturity; and that he voluntarily placed himself under the guardianship of Abdallah. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 222. Sprenger concludes that they held him to be "a *native* of the Greek empire" (p. 162); but this does not appear from the authority quoted.

The description of Suheib is given in considerable detail. He was a little below middle stature, and had much hair. *Ibid.* p. 222½.

† *Ibid.* "When he was about to emigrate the Meccans said unto him, *Thou camest hither in need and penury; but thy wealth*

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Another freed slave, *Ammâr*, used to resort to the house of Arcam and, simultaneously with Suheib, embraced Islam. His father Yâsir, a stranger from Yemen, his mother *Sommeya*, and his brother Abdallah, were also believers.* Ammâr.

hath increased with us, until thou hast reached thy present prosperity; and now thou art departing, not thyself only, but with all thy property. By the Lord that shall not be! And he said, *If I relinquish my property will ye leave me free to depart?* And they agreed thereto. So he parted with all his goods. And when that was told unto Mahomet, he said, VERILY SUHEIB HATH TRAFFICKED TO PROFIT." Another version states that when on his flight he was pursued by the Meccans, he turned round on his camel and swore that if they persisted he would shoot every arrow in his quiver at them, and then take to his sword. So they, knowing him to be one of the best archers in Mecca, left him and returned.

Suheib had some humour. After his flight he reached Medîna in the season of fresh dates; and being weary and hungry, he commenced devouring them eagerly. But he suffered from ophthalmia in one of his eyes, and the Prophet asked why he ate dates as they were injurious to that disease; he replied, *Verily I am eating them on the side only of the eye that is well;* and the Prophet smiled thereat. Suheib then asked Abu Bakr why they had deserted and left him at Mecca to be imprisoned, adding that "he had been forced to buy his life with his wealth;" whereupon Mahomet made use of the weighty saying in the text. Upon the same occasion was produced Sura ii. 207:—*And of men there is one who buyeth his life, through the desire of those things that be pleasing unto God*, &c. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 223. He died A.H. 33, aged seventy, and was buried at Backî, the cemetery of Medîna.

* Yâsir belonged to a tribe in Yemen of the Madhij or Cahlân stock. He with two brothers visited Mecca to seek out their maternal relatives. Instead of returning to Yemen he remained behind with his patran Abu Hodzeifa, who gave him in marriage his slave girl Sommeya. She bore to him Ammâr (freed by Aub Hodzeifa) and Abdallah.

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Story of the blind man, Abdallah ibn Omm Maktûm

The following incident will illustrate at once the anxiety of Mahomet to gain over the principal men of

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"*After* Yâsir" Sommeya married Azrack, a Greek slave, belonging to a man of Taif, and to him she bore Salma. It is not easy to explain this, for at the time referred to in the text (*i.e.* 614 or 615 A.D.) Yâsir was alive, and is mentioned as having with his wife joined the cause of Mahomet and suffered severe persecution. The second marriage of Sommeya, and the birth of Salma, were consequently after this period. But Ammâr, her son by Yâsir, was at least *one* year (perhaps four) older than Mahomet; that is he was now at least forty-six years of age. Consequently, his mother (who had moreover borne to Yâsir a son, Horeith, *older* than Ammâr, *Katîb al Wâckidi*, p. 227), must have been at this time sixty years old. Yet we are to believe that she married, and bore a son, after that age!

The Secretary of Wâckidi has a tradition that Sommeya suffered martyrdom at the hands of Abu Jahl:— فلما لان العشى جا ابو جهل فجعل يشتم سمية و يرفث ثم طعنها فقتلها فهى اول شهيد استشهد فى الاسلام * "*And* (after a day of persecution) *when it was evening, Abu Jahl came and abused Sommeya, and used filthy language towards her, and stabbed* (or reviled?) *her, and killed her. And she was the first martyr in Islam,—excepting Bilâl, who counted not his life dear unto him in the service of the Lord; so that they tied a rope about his neck and made the children run backwards and forwards, pulling him between the two hills of Mecca* (Abu Cobeis and Ahmar, *marg. gloss.*); *and Bilâl kept saying,* ONE, ONE! only God!" *Katîb al Wâckidi*, p. 224.

The story of this martyrdom is certainly apocryphal. I. This is the only place we find it mentioned in the early biographers; whereas had it really occurred, it would have been trumpeted forth by every collector and biographer in innumerable traditions and versions. There is certainly no danger of the perils and losses of the early Moslems being under-estimated or lost sight of by tradition. II. The tendency to exaggerate persecution would readily lead the descendants of the family to attribute

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the Coreish, and when he was rejected, the readiness with which he turned to the poor and uninfluential.

Sommeya's death (which we may conclude happened before the Hegira) to Abu Jahl's ill treatment, with which it had probably little or nothing to do. See Introduction, p. lx, Canon II. B. The double signification of the word طعن (*abuse* and *stabbing*) may have formed a starting point for the story. The manner in which it was subsequently expanded and embellished will be seen by a reference to Sale's note on Sura xvi. p. 106. III. The desire to heap contumely on Abu Jahl would lead to the same result. Introduction, p. lviii., Canon I. G. IV. Bilâl, in the above extract, is also noticed as the first *martyr*, though he long survived these persecutions, and died a natural death. This certainly is in favour of a metaphorical and not an exact and literal interpretation of the passage. V. The chronological difficulty, above stated, still remains. Repeated traditions speak of Yâsir, Sommeya, and Ammâr (Father, Mother, and Son), being all tormented together, and in that predicament seen by Mahomet as he passed by, *Katîb al Wâckidi*, p. 227½; and the manner in which this is mentioned clearly implies that Sommeya was at the time the wife of Yâsir. Yet "*after* Yâsir" (apparently after his death) she married Azrack. How then are we to understand that she died under persecution? It may be suggested (1), that her marriage with Azrack was a previous *interlude* in her married life with Yâsir, to whom she again returned as wife; but this is unlikely and is not the natural meaning of the expressions used;—or (2), that her marriage to Azrack and her martyrdom may have occurred at a later period. But this, too, is out of the question; for she bore Azrack a son, and must have survived the period of hot persecution. On the whole the evidence for the martyrdom is totally insufficient. Azrack belonged to Tâif, and was one of the slaves who at the siege of that city (some fifteen years later), fled over to Mahomet's camp. It is natural to conclude that Sommeya, after Yâsir's death, married Azrack, and lived at Tâif.

Some accounts represent Ammâr as one of the emigrants to Abyssinia, but others state this to be doubtful. He was killed in the battle of Siffin, A.H. 37, aged ninety-one or ninety-four. He was at one period appointed, by Omar, Governor of Cûfa.

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"The Prophet was engaged in deep converse with the Chief Walîd; for he greatly coveted his conversion. Then a blind man Abdallah ibn Omm Maktûm chanced to pass that way, and asked to hear the Coran. And Mahomet was displeased at the interruption, and spake roughly unto him. Other men likewise came up and still farther occupied his attention. So he turned from the blind man frowningly, and left him."* But the heart of Mahomet smote him, because he had thus slighted one whom God perhaps had chosen, and paid court to one whom God had reprobated. As usual the vivid conception of the moment is framed into a divine Revelation, which at once affords relief to his own mind, and ample amends to the neglected enquirer.—

Sura *lxxx.*

SURA LXXX.

The Prophet frowned and turned aside,
Because the Blind man came to him.
And what shall cause thee to know whether haply he may not be purified?
Or whether he might not be admonished, and the Admonition profit him?
As for the Man that is rich,
Him thou receivest graciously;
And it is not thy concern that he is not purified.
But he that cometh unto thee earnestly enquiring,
And trembling anxiously,
Him dost thou neglect.
Nay! but it (the Coran) is an Admonition;
And he that willeth remembereth the same, &c.

* *Hishâmi*, p. 113.

Persecution of converted slaves.

The jealousy and enmity of the Coreish were aggravated by the continued success of the new sect, which now numbered more than fifty followers. The brunt of their wrath fell upon the converted slaves, as well as upon the strangers and believers of the lower classes who had no patron or protector. These were seized and imprisoned; or they were exposed, in the glare of the mid-day sun, upon the scorching gravel of the Meccan valley.* The torment was enhanced by intolerable thirst, until the wretched sufferers hardly knew what they said.† If under this torture they reviled Mahomet and acknowedged the idols of Mecca, they were refreshed by draughts of water brought for the purpose to the spot, and then taken to their homes. Bilál alone escaped the shame of recantation. In the depth of his anguish, the persecutors could force from him but one expression,—AHAD! AHAD! "ONE, ONE, only God!" On such an occasion,‡

* M. Caussin de Perceval, in here rendering the two Arabic words *Ramd-há* and *Bat-há* as names of places, has made a curious and for him a rare mistake. Vol. i. p. 386. The words signify "gravel," and "valley."

† It is added that they used to encase them in coats of mail. The torture thus inflicted by the heated metal can be understood only by those who know the power of a tropical sun beating upon arid sand and rocks. There is however a constant tendency to magnify these sufferings, *and we have no check*. See Introduction, Canon II. B.

‡ Abu Bakr paid for him seven (according to others five) *ouckeas*. When it was told to Mahomet he said, "Wilt thou give

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Abu Bakr passed by, and secured the liberty of conscience to the faithful slave by purchasing his freedom. Some of the others retained the scars of sores and wounds thus inflicted to the end of their lives. Khobâb and Ammâr used to exhibit with pride and exultation the marks of their suffering and constancy to a wondering generation, in which glory and success had well nigh effaced the memory of persecution.*

Converts permitted to dissemble.

Towards those who under such trying circumstances renounced their faith, Mahomet exhibited much commiseration. He even encouraged them to dissemble in order that they might escape the tor-

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me a share in him?" To which Abu Bacr replied that he could not because he had already released him. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 224. Hishâmi gives the following particulars. Waraca used to pass by while Bilâl was being tormented, and intended to buy him. At last Abu Bacr, whose house was in the same quarter, said to his master,—*Dost thou not fear God that thou treatest the poor creature thus?* "Nay," replied his master, "it is thou that hast perverted him; it is for thee to deliver him from this plight." So Abu Bakr bargained to give for him another black slave, much stronger than Bilâl. *Hishâmi*, p. 89.

Abu Bakr bought and freed, besides Bilâl, six male and female slaves, converts to Islam. His father, seeing that they were all poor weak creatures, told him that he had much better redeem able-bodied men who would be fit to help his cause; but Abu Bakr replied that he had done as God had put it in his heart to do.

* Besides these two, the names of five others are given amongst those who suffered severe persecution of this nature: viz. Suheib, Amr ibn Foheira, Abu Fokeiha, and the father and mother of Ammâr. For the vain-glorious boasting of Ammâr, see *Kâtib al Wâkidi*, p. 227½; and of Khobâb, who displayed his scars before Omar when Caliph, *Ibid.* p. 210½.

ment. The prophet happening to pass by Ammâr, as he sobbed and wiped his eyes, enquired of him what was the matter: "Evil, Oh Prophet! They would not let me go until I had abused thee, and spoken well of their gods." *But how dost thou find thy heart?* "Secure and steadfast in the faith." *Then*, replied Mahomet, *if they repeat their cruelty, repeat thou also thy words.* A special exception for such unwilling deniers of Islam, was even provided in the Coran.*

Mahomet himself was safe under the shadow of the respected and now venerable Abu Tâlib, who though unconvinced by the claims of the Prophet, scrupulously acknowledged those of the kinsman, and withstood resolutely every approach of the Coreish to detach him from his guardianship. Mahomet safe under Abu Tâlib's guardianship.

Abu Bakr, too, and those who could claim affinity with any powerful family of Mecca, though exposed perhaps to contumely and reproach, were generally secure from personal injury. The chivalrous feeling which makes common cause among the members and connections of an Arab family, and Position of the converts connected with influential families.

* See Sura xvi. p. 106. *Whoever denieth God after that he hath believed* (EXCEPTING HIM WHO IS FORCIBLY COMPELLED THERETO, HIS HEART REMAINING STEADFAST IN THE FAITH) *on such resteth the wrath of God.* See also Sura xxxix. p. 53, where repentant apostates from Islam ("*those who have transgressed against their own souls*") are exhorted not to despair of the mercy of God. The story of Ammâr is given from various sources by the Kâtib al Wâckidi, p. 227½, and seems authentic.

arouses the fiery impetuosity of all against the injurers of one, deterred the enemies of Islam from open and violent persecution.* Such immunity, however, depended in part on the good will of the convert's family and friends. Where the entire family or tribe were inimical to the new religion, there would always be the risk of insult and injury. Thus, when the Bani Makhzûm were minded to chastise Walîd (among others of their number) for joining Islam, they repaired to his brother Hishâm, a violent opposer of the Prophet, and demanded his permission; this he readily gave, but added,—*Beware of killing him; for if ye do, I shall verily slay in his stead the chiefest among you.*†

First emigration to Abyssinia, A.D. 615.

To escape these indignities, and the danger of perversion, Mahomet now recommended such of his followers as were without protection, to seek an asylum in a foreign land. *Yonder*, pointing to the west, *lieth a country wherein no one is wronged:—a land of righteousness. Depart thither; and there remain until it pleaseth the Lord to open you a way before you.* Abyssinia was well known to the Meccans as a market for the goods of Arabia; and

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* See a notice of this state of society in chap. iv. of the Introduction, p. ccxliii.

† *Hishâmí*, p. 91. Walîd and Hishâm were sons of the famous Walîd ibn al Moghîra, already mentioned as one of the chief men of Mecca, and a violent opponent of Mahomet.

the Court of the *Najâshy* (or king,) was the ordinary destination of one of their annual caravans.* In the month of Rajab, in the fifth year of Mahomet's ministry,† eleven men, some mounted, some on foot, and four of them accompanied by their wives, set out for the port of Shueiba;‡ where finding two vessels about to sail, they embarked in haste, and were conveyed to Abyssinia for half a dinar a-piece. The Meccans are said to have pursued them, but they had already left the port. Among the emigrants were Othmân son of Affân followed by his wife Rockeya the Prophet's daughter, and Abd al Rahmân, both as merchants already perhaps acquainted with the country. The youths Zobeir and Musáb were also of the number. The party was headed by Othmân son of Matzûn, as its leader.§ They met with a kind reception from the Najâshy and his people. The period of exile was passed in peace and in comfort.

This is termed the *first* "hegira" or flight to Abyssinia, as distinguished from the later and more

Bearing and advantages of this emigration.

* "Then Mahomet gave commandment to them to go forth to the land of Abyssinia. Now a just king was there, Al Najâshy. It was a land with which the Coreish used to do merchandize, because they found therein abundance of food, protection, and good traffic." *Tabari*, p. 127.

† *November*, 615 A.D., by the calculations of M. Caussin de Perceval.

‡ شعيبة the ancient port of Mecca, not far from Jiddah.

§ See *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 38½; *Tabari*, p. 127; *Hishâmi*, p. 91; *Sprenger*, p. 182; and *Caussin de Perceval*, vol. i. 383.

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extensive emigration thither. On this occasion the emigrants were few, but the part they acted was of deep importance in the history of Islâm. It convinced the Meccans of the sincerity and resolution of the converts, and proved their readiness to undergo any loss and any hardship rather than abjure the faith of Mahomet. A bright example of self-denial was exhibited to the believers generally, who were led to regard peril and exile in "the cause of God," as a glorious privilege and distinction. It suggested that the hostile attitude of their fellow citizens, together with the purity of their own faith, might secure for them within the limits of Arabia itself a sympathy and hospitality as cordial as that afforded by the Abyssinians; and thus it gave birth to the idea of a greater "hegira," the emigration to Medina. Finally, it turned the attention of Mahomet more closely and more favourably to the Christian religion. If an Arab asylum had not at last offered itself at Medina, the Prophet himself might have emigrated to Abyssinia, and Mohametanism might have dwindled, like Montanism, into an ephemeral Christian heresy.

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SUPPLEMENT TO CHAPTER FOURTH.

The Coran, during the period reviewed in this Chapter.

Substance and composition of the Coran throw light on Mahomet's history.

To complete the view of Islam and its Prophet during the period to which this chapter relates, it is needful that we should examine the portions of the Coran given forth in it; for their purport, and even their style, will throw an important light upon the inner, as well as the external, struggles of Mahomet.

A change observable during this period.

To the two or three years intervening between the commission to preach and the first emigration to Abyssinia, may be assigned about twenty of the Suras as they now stand. During even this short time a marked change may be traced both in the sentiments and the composition of the Coran.*

Gradual decline of life and spirit.

At first, like a mountain stream, the current dashes headlong, pure, wild, impetuous. Such are the fragments described, and quoted, in the Third chapter. As we advance, the style becomes calmer and more uniform; yet ever and anon a tumultuous rhapsody, like the unexpected cataract, interposes thrilling words of ardent conviction and fervid aspiration.† Advancing still, though the dancing stream sometimes sparkles and the foam deceives the eye, we trace a rapid decline in the vivid energy of

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* The Suras of this period consist of about twenty. Their supposed order will be given in an Appendix.

† Throughout this period we find the same wild oaths, noticed in the earlier Suras, constantly recurring. See Suras lxxxi., lxxxiv., lxxxvi., xxxv., lxxvii., lxxv., lxx., 40, lvi., 47. See above p.121, note *.

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natural inspiration, and even the mingling with it of grosser elements. There is yet, indeed, a wide difference from the turbid, tame, and sluggish course of later days; but the tendency towards it cannot be mistaken. The decay of life is now supplied by artificial expedients. Elaborate periods, and the measured cadence of a rhyming prose, convey too often only unmeaning truisms or silly fiction. Although we still meet with powerful reasonings against idolatry, and the burning words of a living faith, yet the chief substance of the Coran begins to be composed of native legends expanded by the Prophet's imagination; pictures of heaven and hell, the resurrection and the judgment day; and dramatic scenes in which the righteous and the damned, angels, genii and infernal spirits, converse in language framed adroitly as arguments in the cause of Mahomet.

The Suras become longer.

The Suras gradually extend in length. In the preceding stage a whole Sura seldom exceeds the quarter of a page. In the present period a simple Sura occupies one, and sometimes two pages.*

Theory of inspiration farther developed.

The theory of inspiration is more fully developed. The Almighty, from whom Revelation alone proceeds, is the sole authority also for its collection, recitation, and correct explanation. On these points Mahomet must wait for heavenly direction. He

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* It is interesting to watch the gradual lengthening of the Suras. Flügel's beautiful quarto edition forms an excellent standard for doing so. The number of *verses*, from their varying length, is not an exact test; but that of the lines and *pages* of the printed volume is. The twenty-two Suras first revealed contain an average of only *five lines* each. The next twenty Suras, (those referred to in the present chapter,) *sixteen lines*; while some of them comprise nearly two *pages*, each of *twenty-two lines*. From this period to the Hegira, the average length of the fifty Suras revealed is three pages and nine lines; some being seven and eight, and one nearly twelve pages long. The average length of the twenty-one Suras given forth after the Hegira is five pages; the longest is Sura Baer (ii.) which has 22½ pages. The iii. iv. and v. Suras have 14½, 13½, and 11, pages respectively.

Up to within a short time of the emigration to Medina, the Suras appear to have been produced generally entire at one time, as we now find them. Subsequently it became Mahomet's practice to throw together, according to their subject matter, verses given forth at various times,—which is one reason why the later Suras are of such great length. See p. vii. chap. i. of the *Introduction*.

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must not be hasty in repeating the Divine words, for "*the Coran is revealed by a gradual revelation*;"* and it is the prerogative of the Lord to prescribe what shall be remembered, and what forgotten.† How much soever the Prophet may have sincerely believed, or persuaded *himself* to believe, that this regulating influence was exercised by the Deity, the doctrine offered an irresistible temptation to suit the substance of the Coran to the varying necessities of the hour. It led eventually to the open assertion (which so damaged his cause in the eyes of unbelievers) that where two passages were irreconcilably opposed in their meaning, the earlier was *abrogated* by the later.

Notwithstanding this apparent fallibility, we begin to find a disposition to claim for the Coran a superstitious reverence by ascribing to it not Divine inspiration only, but a heavenly original. "*Truly, it is the glorious Coran,* IN THE PRESERVED TABLET."‡ A heavenly original assigned to the Coran.

"It is an admonition in revered pages;
Exalted, pure;
Written by scribes honorable and just."§ Suras *lxxx.* and *xcvi.*

* * * *

* انا نحن نزلنا عليك القران تنزيلا *Verily,* WE *send down the Coran by degrees unto thee.* The Ordoo translation of Abd al Cádir has سهج سهج —"slowly and gently."

† "We shall cause thee to rehearse (the Revelation,) and thou shalt not forget, excepting that which the Lord shall please: for He knoweth that which is public and that which is hid; and WE *shall facilitate unto thee* that which is easy." Sura lxxxvii. 6, 7.

In another passage, Mahomet is thus addressed by the Deity;—"And move not thy tongue in the repetition of the Coran, that thou shouldest be hasty therewith. Verily upon Us devolveth the collection thereof, and the recitation thereof; and when We shall have recited it unto thee, then follow thou the recitation thereof. Further, upon Us devolveth the explanation thereof." Sura lxxv. 17-19. So in a latter Sura, we find the following verse: —"And be not hasty in reciting the Coran, before that the revelation thereof hath been completed. And say, *Oh Lord! increase knowledge unto me!*" Sura xx. 113.

‡ Sura lxxxv. 21. Meaning according to Sale's paraphrastic translation, —"*the original whereof is written in a table Kept in Heaven.*"

§ Sura lxxx. 13, 14. "Being transcribed from the preserved table, kept pure and uncorrupted from the hands of evil spirits, and touched only by the Angels." Zamakshari, as quoted by Sale. The *Scribes* apparently mean the Angels.

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Verily WE caused it to descend on the *Night of Power*,
And what shall make thee to know what the NIGHT OF POWER is?
The Night of Power excelleth a thousand months:
On it the Angels and THE SPIRIT descend by their Lord's command upon every errand.
It is Peace until the breaking of the Morn.*

The "holy spirit," came to signify Gabriel.

It is not clear what ideas Mahomet at the first attached to "the Spirit" here spoken of.† They were perhaps indefinite. It was a phrase he had heard used, but with different meanings, by the Jews and Christians. That "the Holy Ghost" (however interpreted) was intended by the term, appears probable from the repeated use, though at a later date, of the expression—"*God strengthened Him* (Jesus) *by the Holy Spirit*."‡ But eventually there can be no doubt that the "Holy Spirit," in the acceptation of Mahomet, came to signify the Angel Gabriel. He had learned, and he believed, that Jesus was "born of the Virgin Mary, by the power of the Holy Ghost;" and either knowingly rejecting the divinity of that blessed Person, or imperfectly informed as to His nature, he seems to have confounded Gabriel announcing the conception, with the Holy Spirit that overshadowed Mary. The two expressions became, in the phraseology of the Coran, synonymous.

Visions of Gabriel.

Gabriel, the "Spirit," was the Messenger that communicated to Mahomet the words of God, and sometimes appeared to him

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* Thus abruptly does the xcvii. Sura open and close. It is a fragment of five verses only. That which God is said in the first verse to have sent down in this night may either signify, with Sale and the commentators, the Coran; or more probably a clear and vivid view of Divine truth which that night burst upon his mind. The "Night of Power" is the famous *Lailat al Cadr*, of which so much has been made in after days.

† The only two other places in which "the Spirit" is mentioned in the revelations of *this period*, are Suras lxxxviii. 37; and lxx. 5. In both "the Spirit" is, in connection with the Angels, alluded to as present at the Day of Judgment.

‡ See Sura ii. 87, 254—وآتينا عيسى ابن مريم البينات وأيدناه بروح القدس—the expression is the same in *both* passages.

* So Sura lviii. 22: "He hath strengthened them (believers) with His Spirit." وأيدهم بروح منه —In later periods of the Coran the same *Verb* is used to imply the communication of supernatural help, as by Angels in battle; Sura ix. 42, vii. 65, iii. 13, viii. 25.

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in a material form. The *traditional* account of the vision of Gabriel at the commencement of his inspiration, has been noticed in the preceding chapter. It is perhaps to this apparition the Prophet alludes in an early Sura of the present period:—

Sura lxxxi.

And I swear by the Star that is retrograde;
By that which goeth forward, and that which disappeareth;
By the Night when it closeth in;
By the Morn when it breaketh!
I swear that this verily is the word of an honoured Messenger;
Powerful; and, in presence of the Lord of the Throne, of great dignity:
Obeyed there and faithful.
And your Companion is not mad.
Truly he hath seen him in the clear Horizon;
And he entertaineth not suspicion regarding the Unseen;
Neither is this the word of a rejected* Devil.
Whither then are ye going?
Verily this is no other than an Admonition to all creatures,—
To *him* amongst you that willeth to walk uprightly.
But ye shall not will, unless the Lord willeth—The Lord of Creation!†

Growth of the doctrine of predestination.

The concluding verses show that Mahomet already contemplated his mission as embracing the whole world. But the vivid conviction of its heavenly origin contrasted strangely with the apathy and unbelief around him; and hence is springing up a belief in the Divine decree of election and reprobation, which alone could account for these spiritual phenomena;—*ye shall not will unless the Lord willeth.*‡ Again in the very strength of the asseveration that he was not deceived, and that his inspiration was not that of a "rejected devil," do we not trace the symptoms of a lurking suspicion that all might possibly not be right?

Teaching and precepts.

The teaching of the Coran is, up to this stage, very simple. Belief in the Unity of God, and in Mahomet as His messenger, in

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* Literally *driven away*, and therefore unable to over-hear the secrets of Heaven.

† Sura lxxxi. vv. 15 to end.

‡ We find the doctrine of predestination appearing in almost the same words in another Sura of this period. *Verily this is a Warning. And whoso willeth taketh the way unto his Lord; and ye shall not will unless God willeth, for God is knowing and wise. He causeth such as He willeth to enter into His Mercy. But as for the Unjust, He hath prepared for them a grievous punishment.* Sura lxxvi. v. 25 to end.

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the resurrection of the dead, and retribution of the good and evil,* are perhaps the sole doctrines insisted upon; and the only duties to be observed, prayer† and charity, honesty in weights and measures,‡ truthfulness in testimony, chastity,§ and the faithful observance of covenants.

Renunciation of Idolatry.

It is doubtful whether, at this period, Mahomet inculcated the rites of the Meccan system as divine. The absence of allusion to them inclines to the opinion that they formed at least no part of his positive teaching. There was at any rate a clear and conclusive renunciation of idolatry:—

Sura *cix.*

SURA CIX.

SAY, Oh, ye unbelievers!
I worship not that which ye worship,—
And ye do not worship that which I worship.
I shall never worship that which ye worship,—
Neither will ye worship that which I worship.
To you be your Religion; to me my Religion.

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* Sura lxx. 26.

† lxxvi. 7, 25; lxx. 23–33. The *times* of prayer are as yet only mentioned generally as Morning, Evening, and Night.

‡ Sura lxxxiii. 1–5; lv. 8. The former opens with a fine philippic against those who defraud in weights and measures. "*What! do these think that they shall not be raised, on the great day! The day on which mankind shall stand before the Lord of all creatures?*"

§ Sura lxx. 29–32. Among other features of the Believer, his chastity is thus described.

—And they are continent,
Except as regardeth their Wives, and that which their right hands possess:—
For in respect of them they shall be blameless.
But he that lusteth after more than that, verily they are the transgressors.

It is to be especially noted that at this early period Mahomet, (according apparently to the loose custom of the country,) admitted slave girls to be *lawful* concubines, besides ordinary wives. Bond women with whom cohabitation is thus approved are here specified by the same phrase as that afterwards used at Medina for female slaves taken captive in war, or obtained by purchase, *viz. that which your right hands possess.* The principle was not at this time abused by Mahomet himself, for he was now living chastely with a single wife of advanced age. Though therefore the license was in after days largely taken advantage of both for his own indulgence, and as holding out an inducement to his followers to fight in the hope of capturing females who would then be lawful concubines as "that which their right hand possessed," yet these were not the original motives for the rule. It was in fact one of the earliest compromises or adaptations, by which Mahomet fitted his system to the usages and wants of those about him.

This Sura is said to have been revealed when the aged Walíd pressed Mahomet to the compromise that his God should be worshipped in conjunction with their deities, or alternately every year.* Whatever the occasion, it breathes a spirit of uncompromising hostility to idolatry.

The vivid pictures of Heaven and Hell, placed to increase their effect in close juxtaposition, are now painted in colours of material joy and torment; which, however to our conceptions absurd and childish, were well calculated to effect a deep impression upon the simple Arab mind. Rest and passive enjoyment; verdant gardens watered by murmuring rivulets, wherein the believers clothed in garments of green silk and brocades with silver ornaments, repose beneath the wide-spreading shade upon couches well furnished with cushions and carpets, drink the sweet waters of the fountain, and quaff aromatic wine (such as the Arab loved) placed in goblets before them, or handed round in silver cups resplendent as glass by beautiful youths: while clusters of fruit hang close and invite the hand to gather them;—such is the frequently repeated and glowing scene, framed to captivate the inhabitant of the thirsty and sterile Mecca.† The Paradise of Mahomet.

And another element is soon added to complete the Paradise of the pleasure-loving Arab:— The Houries of Paradise.

> Verily for the Pious is a blissful abode;
> Gardens and Vineyards,
> And Damsels with swelling bosoms, of an equal age,
> And a full cup.‡

In the oft described shady garden "with fruits and meats, and beakers of wine causing not the head to ache, neither disturbing the reason," these damsels of Paradise are introduced as "*lovely large-eyed Girls,§ resembling pearls hidden in their shells, a reward*

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* *Hishámi*, p. 79; *Tabari*, p. 139.

† These descriptions are literally copied from the Coran. Cnf. Suras lxxxviii. 8; lxxxiii. 22; lxxvii. 41; lxxvi. 12. The wine is in one passage spoken of as sealed with musk, and spiced with ginger.

‡ Sura lxxviii. 30.

§ "Húries." Sura lii. 20; lvi. 24. This is the earliest mention of the Houries, or black-eyed Girls of Paradise, so famous in the Mahometan

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*for that which the faithful have wrought. * * Verily we have created them of a rare creation; we have made them Virgins, fascinating, of an equal age.*"

Farther description of Paradise.

The following passage will illustrate the artificial style and unworthy materialism, into which the fire of early inspiration was now degenerating. It is taken from a psalm with a fixed alternating versicle throughout, quaintly addressed in the dual number both to Men and Genii. To suit the rhyme the objects are introduced in pairs, excepting the Damsels, whose number may not thus be limited.

Sura lv.

* * * This is the Hell which the wicked deny:
They shall pass to and fro between the same and scalding Water.
Which then of the Signs of your Lord will ye deny?
But to him that dreadeth the appearing of his Lord, there shall be two Gardens.
Which then of the Signs of your Lord will ye deny?
Planted with shady trees,
Which then of the Signs of your Lord will ye deny?
Through each of them shall two fountains flow,
Which then of the Signs of your Lord will ye deny?
And in each shall there be of every fruit two kinds,
Which then of the Signs of your Lord will ye deny?
They shall repose on brocade-lined Carpets, the fruits of the two gardens hanging close by,
Which then of the Signs of your Lord will ye deny?
In them shall be modest Girls, refraining their looks, whom before them no Man shall have deflowered, neither any Genius,
Which then of the Signs of your Lord will ye deny?
Like as if they were rubies or pearls.*

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system, and which other creeds have singled out as the distinguishing feature of Islam. They were not thought of, at least not *introduced into the revelation*, till four or five years after Mahomet had assumed the office of Prophet.

* Sura lv. 43, &c. The above is the reward of the *highest* class of believers. Another set of gardens and females is immediately after described for the *common* faithful.

And besides these, there shall be two other Gardens,
Which then of the Signs of your Lord will ye deny?
Of a dark green,
Which then of the Signs of your Lord will ye deny?
In each, two Fountains of welling Water.
Which then of the Signs of your Lord will ye deny?

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The Houries revealed when Mahomet lived chastely with Khadija alone.

It is very remarkable that the notices in the Coran of this voluptuous Paradise are *almost entirely confined* to a time when, whatever the tendency of his desires, Mahomet was living chaste and temperate with a single wife of threescore years of age.* Gibbon characteristically observes that "Mahomet has not specified the male companions of the female elect, lest he should either alarm the jealousy of the former husbands, or disturb their felicity by the suspicion of an everlasting marriage." The remark, made in raillery, is pregnant with reason, and aims a fatal blow (if any were needed) at the Paradise of Islam. Faithful women will renew their youth in heaven as well as faithful men; why should not

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In each fruits, and the Palm and the Pomegranate.
Which then of the Signs of your Lord will ye deny?
In them shall be Women, amiable, lovely;
Which then of the Signs of your Lord will ye deny?
Large-eyed Houries kept within Pavilions;
Which then of the Signs of your Lord will ye deny?
Whom no Man shall have deflowered before them, nor any Genius;
Which then of the Signs of your Lord will ye deny?
The Believers shall recline upon green rugs, and lovely carpets,
Which then of the Signs of your Lord will ye deny?

So at a somewhat later date;—"And close unto the believers shall be modest damsels refraining their looks, like ostrich eggs delicately covered." Sura xxxvii. 49. In a passage of the same period, the faithful are said to be "*married*" to these "large-eyed Houries." Sura xliv. 53. See also Sura xxxviii. 53.

In four other places of a still later date, and probably after *Khadija's* death, the *Wives* of believers (their *proper* wives of this world apparently) are spoken of as entering into paradise with their husbands. Did Mahomet deem it possible that the earthly wives might still remain united to their husbands in Paradise, in spite of their new black-eyed rivals? Suras xxxvi. 55; xliii. 68; xxiii. 25; xl. 9.

* It is noteworthy that in the Medina Suras, that is in all the voluminous revelations of the ten years following the Hegira, women are only twice referred to as constituting one of the delights of Paradise; and on both occasions in these simple words,—*and to them* (believers,) *there shall be therein pure wives.* Sura ii. 25; iv. 55. Was it that the soul of Mahomet had at that period no longings after what he had then even to satiety the enjoyment of? Or that a closer contact with Jewish principles and morality repressed the budding pruriency of the Revelation, and covered with merited confusion the picture of his sensual Paradise which had been drawn at Mecca?

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their good works merit an equal and analogous reward? But Mahomet shrank from this legitimate conclusion.

The Hell of the Coran.

The Hell of Mahomet is no less material and gross than his Heaven. The drink of the damned is boiling water and filthy corruption. When cast into the Pit, they hear it roar wildly like the braying of an ass. "Hell boileth over, it almost bursteth with fury: the smoke, rising in three columns, affordeth neither shade nor protection, but casteth forth great sparks like castles, or as it were yellow camels."*

Sura lvi.

* * And the companions of the Left Hand, how miserable they!
In scorching Blasts, and scalding Water,
And the shade of Smoke
That is not cold nor is it grateful.
Verily before that, they lived in Pleasure;
And they were bent upon great Wickedness,
And they used to say,
What! after we have died and become dust and bones, shall we be raised?
Or our Fathers that preceded us?
SAY, yea, verily, the Former and the Latter
Shall be gathered at the time of the appointed Day.
Then shall you, oh ye that err and reject the Truth!
Eat assuredly of the Tree of ZAKKUM,
Filling your bellies therewith,
And drinking thereupon boiling water,
As a thirsty Camel drinketh.
This shall be your entertainment on the Day of Reckoning!
Sura lvi. 42–58.

Threats of temporal judgment.

Suras lxxvii. lxxviii. and lxii.

The menace of a nearer vengeance in this life begins to loom darkly forth, yet mingled mysteriously with the threats of the Judgment-day and Hell, thus:—

* * The Day of separation!
And what shall make thee know what the DAY OF SEPARATION meaneth?
Woe on that day unto the deniers of the Truth!
What! Have we not destroyed the former Nations?
Wherefore we shall cause the latter to follow them.
Thus shall we deal with the wicked People!
Woe on that day unto the deniers of the Truth.†

* See Suras lxxxviii. 1; lxxviii. 23; lxxvii. 30; lxvii. 6.
† Sura lxxvii. 13, 19.

* * * Verily, we warn you of a Punishment close at hand,—
The day whereon a man shall see that which his hands have wrought;
And the unbelievers shall say, *Oh! would that I were dust!**
* * * What! are ye secure that he who dwelleth in the Heavens will not cause the Earth to swallow you up, and she shall quake?
Or that he will not send upon you an overwhelming Blast, and then ye shall know of what nature is my warning?
And verily the Nations that preceded these, denied the Truth; and how awful was my Vengeance!†

Defiance of the Meccans.

But the men of Mecca scoffed at this threat, and defied the preacher to bring it into execution.

Sura lxvii.

* * * And they say, *When shall this promised Vengeance be, if ye speak the Truth?*
Say; "Nay, verily, the knowledge thereof is with God alone; as for me I am but a plain Warner."
But when they see it, the countenance of those who disbelieved shall fall;
And it shall be said, *This is that which ye have been calling for.*
Say; "What think ye? whether the Lord destroy me and those that be with me or have mercy upon us, who shall deliver the Unbelievers from a dreadful Punishment?"‡

Objections of the Meccans and answers thereto entered in the Coran.

We begin also to find detailed in the Coran the arguments used by the Meccans against the Prophet, and the mode in which he replied to them. The progress of incredulity can thus be followed, and the very expressions employed by either party traced.

Resurrection derided.

The Resurrection of the body was derided by his fellow-citizens as an idle imagination. When the Prophet sought to illustrate the raising of the dead by the analogies of Nature, and the power of God in creation, he was scouted as a Sorcerer or Magician, who would pretend that a living body could be produced from dust and dead men's bones.

The Coran impugned.

The Coran was denounced at one time as a bare-faced imposture, as *Fables of the Ancients*§ borrowed from the foreigners at Mecca, and dressed up to suit the occasion; at other times, as the

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* Sura lxxviii. 39.

† Sura lxvii. 16.

‡ *Ibid.* 25.

§ Sura lxxxiii. 13, اساطير الاولين Sprenger has an ingenious and possible theory that *Asatir* is a corruption of *Historiae*.

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effusion of a phrenzied poet,* or the incoherent drivelling of an insane fool.

Derision.

Jeers and jests were the ordinary weapons by which the believers were assailed:—

Sura lxxxiii.

Verily, the Sinners laugh the Faithful to scorn.
When they pass by them, they wink at one another.
And when they turn aside unto their own people, they turn aside jesting scurrilously.
And when they see them, they say, *Verily,* THESE *are the erring ones.*
But they are not sent to be keepers over them.
Wherefore one day the Faithful shall laugh the Unbelievers to scorn.
Lying upon couches, they shall behold them in Hell.†

Patience and stedfastness inculcated.

Amid the derision and the plots of the Meccans, patience is in the Coran inculcated on the Prophet. His followers are exhorted to stedfastness and resignation, and in one passage are reminded of the constancy of the Christian martyrs in Najrân.‡

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* Mahomet disliked nothing so much as being called a poet, and rejected the equivocal honour of the appellation. He probably felt it his weakest point; conscious of the labour he bestowed on the versification and cadence of his revelations which he would have the world believe, and perhaps himself believed, to be the results and the marks of divine inspiration.

He affected at Medîna to be unable to distinguish poetry from prose; and even when put right he continued to transpose the words of a couplet which the Mussulmans sang as they laboured at the building of their Mosque. The lines were,—

اللهم لا عيش الا عيش الاخره *
اللهم ارحم الانصار و المهاجره *

The termination *illâ aish al âkhira,* rhymes with *al ansâr w'al muhâjira.* But Mahomet would insist on repeating the last line with the words transposed;—thus *al muhâjira w'al ansâr,* or *al ansâr w'al muhâjirin;* thus destroying the rhyme. *Hishâmi* p. 173.

† Sura lxxxiii. 29–34.

‡ Sura lxxxv.—

By the Heavens with their Zodiacal Signs;
By the threatened Day!
By the Witness and the Witnessed!
Damned be the *Diggers of the pits* filled with burning Fuel, when they sat around the same.
And they were witnesses of that which they did unto the Believers.

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Jewish and Christian Scriptures not yet referred to.

There is at this period hardly any allusion to Jewish and Christian Scripture or legend.* The Coran did not yet rest its claim upon the evidence of previous Revelation, and the close correspondence therewith of its own contents.

The Language of Islam becomes fixed.

The peculiar phraseology of the new faith was already becoming fixed. The dispensation of Mahomet was distinguished as ISLAM, that is the surrender of the soul to God; his followers as MUSALMÁNS (those who *surrender themselves*), or as Believers;† his opponents as KÁFIRS, that is, *rejecters of the divine message*, or as MUSHRIKÍN, namely such as *associate* companions or sharers with the Deity. Faith, Repentance, Heaven, Hell, Prayer, Almsgiving, and many other terms of the religion, soon acquired their stereotyped meaning. The naturalization in Arabia of Judaism and Christianity (but chiefly of the former), provided a ready and extensive fund of theological words and phrases which, if not already in actual current use, were at least widely known in a sense approaching that which Mahomet attached to them.‡

And they tormented them no otherwise than because they believed in God the Mighty and the Glorious.

Verily they who persecute the Believers, male and female, and repent them not,

For such the torment of Hell is prepared, and a burning anguish, &c.

The "diggers of the pits" were the Jewish persecutors of Yemen, Dzu Nowás and his followers. See Introduction, chap. iii. p. clxii.

* See Suras lxxxv. 18; lxxxvii. 18; lxxiii. 14. These passages contain passing references to Abraham, Moses, and Pharoah.

† Thus in Sura lxxxv. v. 10, we have مؤمنين and مؤمنات for *male* and *female believers*. "Moslems" مسلمين occurs frequently; and مسلمات "female Moslems," in Sura lxvi. 5.

‡ See remarks on the prevalence of Jewish legends and expressions, in Introduction, chap. ii. p. cxxv. and chap. iii. p. ccxviii. It is difficult to overestimate the advantages which Mahomet thus possessed in having the tacit acquiescence of the Meccans in the truth of former Revelations, and in being able to appropriate the treasury of apt and ready terms already current as expressive of the spiritual ideas he wished to attach to them, or at least containing the germ capable of easy development.

Thus the phrase, "the merciful, the compassionate" affixed by Mahomet to the name of God, though not actually in use, was known among the

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These remarks have been almost entirely confined to the portion of the Coran produced by Mahomet during the period reviewed in the present chapter. By thus connecting the several periods of his active life with the Suras belonging to them, the enquirer is best able to trace the development of the religious system, and to observe what bearing the external circumstances of the Arabian Prophet may have had upon the peculiarities of his creed.

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idolatrous Meccans, as we see by the treaty of Hodeibia. In dictating to the scribes the terms of this truce, Mahomet commenced, "In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate." The Meccans interrupted him, saying:—"Nay, as for God, we acknowledge him, but as for the Compassionate and Merciful, we acknowledge him not." Then said the Prophet: "Write, *in thy name, Oh God!*"

قال (محمد) اكتبوا بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم قالوا اما الله فنعرفه و اما الرحمن الرحيم فلا نعرفه *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 119½; *Hishêmi*, p. 326.

Geiger has examined ingeniously and carefully the Mahometan terms borrowed from Judaism in his *Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen*. See also for some analogous remarks, *Hävernick's Introduction to Old Testament*, p. 116; vol 28, *Clark's For. Theol. Lib.*

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CHAPTER FIFTH.

Progress of Islam from the fifth to the tenth Year of the Mission of Mahomet.

Return of the Abyssinian refugees, 615 A.D.

THREE months had not elapsed from the departure of the little band to Abyssinia, when, notwithstanding the secure retreat and hospitable reception offered at the Najashy's Court, they again appeared in Mecca. Their return is linked with one of the strangest episodes in the life of the Prophet. Hishâmi contents himself with saying that they came back because tidings reached them of the conversion of the Coreish. Wâckidi and Tabari give another story, of which the following is a close outline.

The *Lapse* of Mahomet.

The aim of Mahomet had been the regeneration of his people. But he had fallen miserably short of it. The conversion of forty or fifty souls ill compensated the bitter alienation of the whole community. His heart was vexed and his spirit chafed by the violent opposition of the most respected and influential Chiefs. The prospect was dark; to the human eye, hopeless. Sad and dispirited, the

He is downcast and desires a reconciliation with his fellow citizens.

GSL

Arabian Prophet longed for a reconciliation, and cast about how it could be effected.

Narrative by Wâckidi and Tabari.

"On a certain day, the chief men of Mecca, assembled in a group beside the Kaaba, discussed as was their wont the affairs of the city; when Mahomet appeared and, seating himself by them in a friendly manner, began to recite in their hearing the LIII. Sura. The chapter opens with a description of the first visit of Gabriel to Mahomet, and of a later vision of that angel, in which certain heavenly mysteries were revealed. It then proceeds;—

And see ye not LÂT and OZZA,
And MANÂT the third besides?

Satan tempts Mahomet to an idolatrous concession.

"When he had reached this verse, the devil suggested an expression of the thoughts which for many a day had possessed his soul; and put into his mouth* words of reconciliation and compromise, the revelation of which he had been longing for from God,† namely;—

These are the exalted Females,
And verily their Intercession is to be hoped for.‡

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* Literally, "Cast upon his tongue."

† *Tabari*, p. 140.— القى الشيطان على لسانه لما كان يحدث به نفسه و يتمنى ان ياتى به قومه —These words, however, do not occur in the second version given by Tabari, nor in the tradition of Wâckidi.

‡ تلك الغرانيق العلى و ان شفاعتهن لترتجى —*Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p 39; *Tabari*, p. 140-142. Tabari gives ترتضى throughout; the rendering of which would be "whose inter-

"The Coreish were surprised and delighted with this acknowledgment of their deities; and as Mahomet wound up the Sura with the closing words,— The Coreish worship with him.

Wherefore bow down before God, and serve Him,

the whole assembly prostrated themselves with one accord on the ground and worshipped. Walíd alone, the son of Mughira, unable from the infirmities of age to bow down, took a handful of earth and worshipped, pressing it to his forehead.*

"And all the people were pleased at that which Mahomet had spoken, and they began to say,— *Now we know that it is the Lord alone that giveth life and taketh it away, that createth and supporteth. These our goddesses make intercession with Him for us; and as thou hast conceded unto them a portion, we are content to follow thee.* But their words disquieted Mahomet, and he retired to his house. In the evening Gabriel visited him; and the Prophet recited the Sura unto him. And Gabriel said, *What is this that thou hast done? thou hast repeated before the people words that I never gave unto thee.* So Mahomet grieved sore, and feared the Lord greatly; and he said, *I have spoken of God that which He hath not said.* But the Lord comforted The people pleased. Mahomet disowns the whole proceeding.

cession is *pleasing* unto God." Sprenger has in this instance quoted the MS. of Tabari incorrectly in his valuable *Notice of Tabari*, in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, 1850, No ii p. 129. The unusual phrase الغرانيق signifies *delicate, swan-like.*

* The same is related of Abu Oheiha, *i.e.* Saad, son of Al As. *Kitáb al Wáckidi*, p. 39.

His Prophet,* and restored his confidence, and cancelled the verse, and revealed the true reading thereof (as it now stands), namely,

> And see ye not LÂT and OZZA,
> And MANÂT the third beside?
> What! shall there be male progeny unto you, and female unto him?
> That were indeed an unjust partition!
> They are naught but names, which ye and your Fathers have invented, &c.

The Coreish more bitter than ever.

"Now when the Coreish heard this, they spake among themselves, saying, *Mahomet hath repented his favourable mention of the rank held by our goddesses before the Lord. He hath changed the same, and brought other words in its stead.* So the two Satanic verses were in the mouth of every one of the unbelievers,† and they increased their malice,‡ and

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* Mahomet was consoled, tradition says, by the revelation of the 53rd and 54th verses of Sura xxii., which signified that all former prophets had been subject to the same evil suggestions of the devil; but the Sura in which they stand appears to have been revealed at a somewhat later period.

The passage is as follows: *And we have not sent before thee any Apostle, nor any Prophet, but when he longed, Satan cast suggestions into his longing. But God shall cancel that which Satan suggesteth. Then shall God establish his revelations (and God is knowing and wise);—that he may make what Satan hath suggested a trial unto those whose hearts are diseased and hardened,* &c.

† وكان ذانك الحرفان اللذان القى الشيطان على لسان رسول قد وقع فى فم كل مشرك — *Tabarí*, p. 42.

‡ It has been explained in a note to chap. i. of the Introduction, that the whole story, as given above, has been omitted by Ibn Hishâm. See p. lxxiii. Canon II. 1. But that it was contained in

stirred them up to persecute the faithful with still greater severity."

Pious Mussulmans of after days, scandalized at the lapse of their Prophet into so flagrant a concession to idolatry, would reject the whole story.* But the authorities are too strong to be impugned. It is hardly possible to conceive how the tale, if not founded in truth, could ever have been invented. The stubborn fact remains, and is by all admitted, that the first refugees did return about this time from Abyssinia; and that they returned in consequence of a rumour that Mecca was converted. To this fact the narratives of Wâckidi and Tabari afford the only intelligible clue. At the same time, it is by no means necessary that we should literally adopt the exculpatory version of Mahometan tradition; or seek, in the interposition of Satan and Gabriel, an explanation of actions to be equally accounted for by the natural workings of the Prophet's mind.

This narrative founded on fact.

It is obvious that the lapse was no sudden The concession was

Ibn Ishâc's works (which Ibn Hishâm professes to follow,) is evident from its being quoted by Tabari *expressly from that author*. See Sprenger's Note in the *Calcutta Asiatic Journal*, where the original passages are quoted at length.

* That *the scandal* of the narrative has been the cause of its rejection is admitted even by orthodox Mahometan writers. The author of the biography *Mawâhib alladoniya*, shows, in opposition to the assertion that the story is heretical, that it rests on unexceptionable tradition, and that the opposing authorities are groundless, being founded only on the *suspicion* that the facts are *unlikely*. See note above quoted.

neither unpremeditated, nor immediately withdrawn.

event. It was not a concession won by surprize, or an error of the tongue committed unawares, and immediately withdrawn. The hostility of his people had long pressed upon the spirit of Mahomet; and, in his inward musings, it is admitted even by orthodox tradition that he had been meditating the very expressions which, as is alleged, the devil prompted him to utter. Neither can we believe that the concession lasted but for a day. To outward appearance the reconciliation must have been consolidated and complete; and it must have continued at the least for some days, probably for many, to allow of the report going forth and reaching the exiles in a shape sufficient to inspire them with confidence. We are warranted therefore in assuming a far wider base and a more extensive action for the event, than are admitted by ex-parte tradition.

Mahomet tempted to it by the hope of gaining over his people.

The circumstances may be thus conceived. Up to this point, the religion of Mahomet was a spiritual system, of which Faith, and Prayer, and the inculcation of virtue, form the prominent features. Though the Kaaba and some of its rites may have been looked upon as founded by the patriarch Abraham, the existing worship as a whole was rejected by reason of its idolatry and corruption.* Yet to this superstition, *with all its practices*, the

* This may be concluded from the fact that in the Coran, as revealed up to this period, the observances of the Kaaba are never referred to or inculcated, as they frequently are at a subsequent stage.

people were obstinately wedded; and, unless permission were given to join more or less the time-honoured institutions of Mecca with the true Faith, there was little hope of a general conversion. How far would the strong expediency of the case justify him to meet half way the prevailing system? How far was it the will of God to admit concession?

Was not the worship of the Kaaba, after all, a *Divine* institution? The temple was built at the command of God; the compassing of it symbolized the circling course of the heavenly bodies, and the obedience of all creation to the Deity. Love and devotion were nurtured by the kissing of the sacred Corner-stone: the slaying of sacrifices, a pious rite in commemoration of Abraham's readiness to offer up his son, signified a like submission;* the pilgrimage to Arafat, the shaving of the head, and all the other popular observances were innocent, if not directly religious, in their tendency. But how shall he treat the Images of the Kaaba, and the gross idolatry rendered to them? In their present mind the Coreish would never abandon these. But if (as they professed themselves ready) they would

Considerations by which he may have been influenced.

* Which of his sons Abraham made ready to sacrifice, is not specified in the Coran. We are not at liberty to assume, with Mahometan Doctors, that their Prophet *meant* Ishmael, nor even that he believed the place of sacrifice to have been the vicinity of Mecca. If, however, the current of ancient tradition among the Meccan Arabs already ran so, it is *possible* that Mahomet may have followed it, but without specification in the Coran, for fear of offending the Jews.

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acknowledge the one true God as the supreme Lord, and look to the Idols as symbolical only of his angels, what harm would result from their bare continuance? Incredible as the concession may appear, and utterly irreconcilable with his first principles of action, Mahomet acceded to it, and consented to maintain the Idols as the representatives of heavenly beings "whose intercession was to be hoped for with the Deity." The hurried and garbled notices of tradition give no farther insight into the compromise. If Mahomet stipulated for any safeguards against the abuses of idolatry, no trace of them can be now discovered. We only know that the arrangements, of whatever nature, gave perfect satisfaction to the chiefs and people, and produced a temporary union.

Error soon discovered;

But Mahomet was not long in perceiving the inconsistency into which he had been betrayed. The people still worshipped Images, and not God. No reasoning upon his part, no assurance from them, could dissemble the galling fact that the practice of idolatry continued as gross and rampant as ever.

and remedied by a complete disavowal.

His only safety now lay in disowning the concession. The devil had deceived him. The words of compromise were no part of the divine system received from God through his heavenly messenger. The lapse was thus remedied. The heretical verses spoken under delusion were cancelled, and others

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revealed in their stead, denying the existence of female Angels such as Lât and Ozza, and denouncing idolatry with a sentence of irrevocable condemnation. Henceforward the Prophet wages mortal strife with images in every shape. His system gathers itself up into a pure and stern theism; and the Coran begins to breathe (though as yet only in the persons of Moses and Abraham) intimations of an iconoclastic revenge.*

Idols reprobated.

Ever after, the intercession of idols is scouted as futile and absurd. Angels dare not to intercede with the Almighty;† how much less the idols, who

> * * * have no power over even the Husk of a date stone;
> Upon whom if ye call, they hear not your calling,
> And if they heard they would not answer you;
> And in the Day of Judgment, they shall reject your deification of them.‡

And the ruling of providence asserted to be with God only.

The following passage, produced shortly after his lapse, shows how Mahomet refuted his adversaries, and adroitly turned against them the concession they had made of the Supreme Deity of God alone.

> And if thou askest them who created the Heavens and the Earth, they will surely answer God.§ SAY, what think ye then? If the Lord be pleased to visit me with affliction, can those upon whom *ye* call besides God,—what! could *they* remove the visita-

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* See Suras xxxvii. 92, xxi. 58; xx. 95.

† Sura liii. 38; *et passim.*

‡ xxxv. 14; xlvi. 4.

§ See also Sura xliii. 18; and other places, in which the Meccans are represented as giving a similar reply.

tion? Or if He visit me with mercy, could *they* withhold His mercy? SAY, God sufficeth for me; in Him alone let those that put their trust, confide.*

The lapse, and danger of the compromise, keenly felt.

However short his fall, Mahomet retained a keen sense of his disgrace, and of the danger which lay in parleying with his adversaries;—

And truly they were near tempting thee aside from what we revealed unto thee, that thou shouldest fabricate regarding Us a different revelation; and then they would have taken thee for their friend.

And if it had not been that WE stablished thee, verily thou hadst nearly inclined unto them a little;

Then verily WE had caused thee to taste both of the punishment of Life, and the punishment of Death;

Then thou shouldest not have found against Us any Helper.†

Ever and anon the Prophet is cautioned in the Coran to beware lest he should be induced to change the words of inspiration, out of a desire to deal gently with his people; or be deluded, by the pomp and numbers of the idolaters, into following after them and deserting the straight and narrow path indicated for him by God.‡

Mahomet's position with the Meccans injured by the lapse.

But although Mahomet may have completely re-established his own convictions, and fully regained the confidence of his adherents, there is little doubt that the concession to idolatry, followed by a recantation so sudden and entire, seriously weakened his position with the people at large. *They* would not

* Sura xxxix. 38

† Sura xvii. 74—76.

‡ See Suras lxviii. 8; xviii. 28; xiii. 40; xxxix. 15.

readily credit the excuse, that words of error were "cast by the devil into the mouth of Mahomet."* Even supposing it to have been so, what faith could be placed in the revelations of a Prophet liable to such influences? The Divine author of a true revelation must know beforehand all that he will at any subsequent period reveal. If the Coran were in truth *His* oracle, Mahomet would never be reduced to the petty shift of retracting as a mistake that which had once been given forth as a message from heaven. The Coreish laughed to scorn the futile endeavour of the Prophet to produce a union, and draw them away from idolatry. They addressed him thus ironically;—

And when they see thee, they receive thee no otherwise than scoffingly,—"*Ah! is this he whom God hath sent an Apostle? verily he had nearly seduced us from our Gods, unless we had patiently persevered therein.*" But they shall know hereafter, when they see the torment, who hath erred most from the right way.†

To the accusations triumphantly advanced by his adversaries, Mahomet could oppose simply the reiteration of his own assurance;— He can only reiterate his own conviction.

And when WE change one verse in place of another, (and God best knoweth that which he revealeth) they say,—"*Verily thou plainly art a Fabricator.*" Nay! but the most of them understand not. SAY;—The Holy Spirit hath brought it down from thy Lord, &c.

We have seen that it was the tidings of the reconciliation with the Coreish that induced the little The Abyssinian emigrants

* See Sura xxii. 53, quoted above p. 152, note.

† Sura xvi. 101.

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Return to Mecca, 615 A.D.

band of emigrants, after a two months' residence in Abyssinia, to set out for Mecca.* As they approached the city, a party of travellers returning from it communicated the information that Mahomet had withdrawn his concessions, and that the Coreish had resumed their oppression. After consulting for a moment what should now be done, they resolved to go forward and visit their homes;—If things came to the worst, they could but again escape to Abyssinia. So they entered Mecca, each under the protection of a relative or friend.†

The Second Emigration to Abyssinia, A.D. 615–616.

The tidings brought by the emigrants of their kind reception by the Najâshy, following upon the late events, annoyed the Coreish, and the persecution became hotter than ever.‡ Wherefore Mahomet again recommended his followers to take refuge in Abyssinia. The first party of the new expedition thither set out probably about the sixth year of the mission; and thereafter at intervals small bodies of converts, accompanied sometimes

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* They emigrated in the month of Rajab, in the fifth year of Mahomet's mission, and remained in Abyssinia the two succeeding months of Shâbân and Ramdhân. The lapse and reconciliation with the Coreish happened in Ramdhân. The emigrants returned to Mecca in the following month, Shawwâl, of the same year. *Kôtb al Wâckidi*, p. 39½.

† All but Abdallah ibn al Masûd, who is said to have had no patron or guardian, and to have again returned after a little space to Abyssinia. *Ibid.* p. 39½.

‡ *Ibid.*

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by their wives and children, joined the exiles, until they reached (without calculating their little ones) the number of 101. Of these, eighty-three were men. Amongst the women, eleven were of Coreish descent, and seven belonged to other tribes. Thirty-three of the men, with eight women, (including Othmân and Rockeya, the daughter of Mahomet,) again returned to Mecca; most of these eventually emigrated to Medîna. The rest of the refugees remained in Abyssinia for several years, and did not rejoin Mahomet until his expedition to Kheibar, in the seventh year of the Hegira.*

* *K. al Wac.* p. 39½; *Hishâmi*, p. 92; *Tabari*, p. 129. Sprenger, though admitting that he thereby opposes all the early authorities, places the second emigration to Abyssinia later, viz. after the withdrawal of Mahomet and his followers into the *Sheb*, or quarter of Abu Tâlib; that is in the seventh year of his mission. His reason is that at the end of the sixth year there were not many more than fifty converts, whereas the second emigration to Abyssinia embraced as many as a hundred persons; and that it is not probable the number of Moslems should have thus doubled in a few months.

But the number of emigrants to Abyssinia is given at 100, as *the aggregate of all who from first to last proceeded thither*. They did not all set out at once, but, as is distinctly said, in parties one after another, and probably at considerable intervals. The fact therefore that the total number exceeded 100, is not in the least inconsistent with the position that the first party was small, or that the whole of Mahomet's followers may not at the time of its departure have exceeded fifty.

Hishâmi (p. 114) has mixed up the return of the thirty-three emigrants belonging to the *second* Abyssinian expedition, with the much earlier return of the whole of the emigrants of the first expedition consequent upon the lapse of Mahomet.

Of those who returned from the second expedition there may be enumerated (besides Othmân), Abu Hodzeifa, Abdallah ibn Jahsh,

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The Coreish endeavour to make Abu Tâlib abandon Mahomet.

Although Mahomet himself was not yet forced to quit his native city, he was nevertheless exposed to indignity and insult, while the threatening attitude of his adversaries gave good ground for apprehension and anxiety. If, indeed, it had not been for the influence and stedfast protection of Abu Tâlib, it is clear that the hostile intentions of the Coreish would have imperilled the liberty, perhaps the life of Mahomet. A body of their Elders* repaired to the aged Chief, and said:—*This Nephew of thine hath spoken opprobriously of our gods and our religion: and hath abused us as fools, and given out that our forefathers were all astray. Now, avenge us thyself of our adversary; or, (seeing that thou art in the same case with ourselves,) leave him to us that we may take our satisfaction.* But Abu Tâlib

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Otba, Zobeir ibn al Awwam, Musáb, Tuleib, Abd al Rahmân. These all subsequently emigrated with Mahomet to Medina. Several of those who returned to Mecca were confined there (as is alleged) by their relatives, and thus prevented from joining Mahomet till after the first battle. One of them, Abdallah ibn Soheil, fled from the Coreish to Mahomet's army at the battle of Badr.

Sakrân was among those who returned from Abyssinia to Mecca, where he died. It was his widow Sauda, whom Mahomet first married after Khadîja's death.

Othmân revisited Mecca under the guardianship of Walîd, son of Mughira, the great enemy of Islam.

* They consisted of Walîd ibn al Mughira, Otba and Sheyba sons of Rabia, Abu Jahl, Abu Sofian, As ibn Wâil, &c. Probably the most violent of the opponents of Islam have been singled out, without much discrimination or authority by the biographers, for this office.

answered them softly and in courteous words; so they turned and went away. In process of time, as Mahomet would not change his proceedings, they went again to Abu Tálib in great exasperation; and, reminding him of their former demand that he would restrain his nephew from his offensive conduct, added:—*and now verily we cannot have patience any longer with his abuse of us, our ancestors, and our gods; wherefore either do thou hold him back from us, or thyself take part with him that the matter may be decided between us.* Having thus spoken, they departed. And it appeared grievous to Abu Tálib to break with his people, and be at enmity with them; neither did it please him to desert and surrender his nephew. Thus being in straits, he sent for Mahomet, and having communicated the saying of the Coreish, proceeded earnestly;—*Therefore, save thyself and me also; and cast not upon me a burden heavier than I can sustain.* Mahomet was startled and alarmed. He imagined that his uncle, finding himself unequal to the task, had resolved to abandon him. His high resolve did not fail him even at this critical moment. Firmly, he replied:—*if they brought the Sun to my right hand, and the Moon to my left, to force me from my undertaking, verily, I would not desist therefrom until the Lord made manifest my cause, or I perished in the attempt.* But the thought of desertion by his kind protector overcame him. He burst into tears, and turned to

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Abu Tâlib persists in his protection.

depart. Then Abu Tâlib called aloud:—"Son of my brother! Come back." So he returned. And Abu Tâlib said:—*Depart in peace, my nephew! and say whatsoever thou desirest. For, by the Lord! I will not, in any wise, give thee up for ever.**

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* I have chiefly here followed Hishâmi (p. 71) and Tabari (p. 124). But at p. 123, the latter makes the noble speech of Mahomet to be a reply to his uncle at a time when the latter had said to him *before the Coreish*,—"Verily thy people ask of thee a reasonable thing, that thou leave off to abuse their gods, and they will leave off to abuse thee and thy God." *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 38½.

There is some confusion as to the time when this scene occurred. There were probably several conferences ending in threats, and tradition has no doubt amplified them. One of these conferences is said to have occurred at Abu Tâlib's deathbed, several years later. The Coreish, hearing that Abu Tâlib lay at the point of death, sent a deputation in order that some compact should be made to bind both parties, after his decease should have removed all restraint upon Mahomet. They proposed accordingly that they should retain their ancient faith, and that Mahomet should promise to refrain from abuse or interference; in which case they on their part would agree not to molest him in his faith. Abu Tâlib called Mahomet, and communicated to him the reasonable request. Mahomet replied—"Nay, but there is one word, which if ye concede, you will thereby conquer Arabia, and reduce Ajam under subjection." "Good!" said Abu Jahl, "not one such word, but ten." Mahomet replied,—"Then say,—*There is no God but the Lord*, and abandon that which ye worship beside him." And they clapped their hands in rage;—"Dost thou desire, indeed, that we should turn our gods into one God? That were a strange affair!" And they began to say one to another, "This fellow is obstinate and impracticable. Ye will not get from him any concession that ye desire. Return, and let us walk after the faith of our forefathers, till God determine the matter betwixt us and him." So they arose and departed. *Hishâmi*, p. 136.

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Some add the following incident. The same day, Mahomet disappeared and was no where to be found. Abu Tálib, apprehensive of foul play, forthwith made ready a band of Háshimite youths each armed with a dirk, and set out for the Kaaba. By the way, he was stopped by the intelligence that Mahomet was safe in a house on Safa; so he returned with his people home. On the morrow, the aged Chief again made ready his party and, taking Mahomet with them, repaired to the Kaaba. There, standing before the assembly of the Coreish, he desired his young men to uncover that which they had by them; and each drew forth a sharp weapon. Then turning to the Coreish, he exclaimed:—*By the Lord! Had ye killed him, there had not remained one alive amongst you.* You *should have perished, or* WE *had been annihilated.* The bold front of Abu Tálib awed the Coreish, and repressed their insolence.* A scene at the Kaaba. Abu Tálib awes the Coreish.

Though the tendency of tradition is to magnify the insults of the unbelieving Meccans, yet apart from invective and abuse, we read of hardly any personal injury or suffering sustained by Mahomet himself. A few of the inveterate enemies of Islam, (Abu Lahab among the number,) who lived close by his house, used spitefully to throw unclean and offensive things at the Prophet, or upon his hearth as he cooked his food. Once they flung into his Personal indignities sustained by Mahomet.

* *Kitáb al Wáckidi*, p. 38½.

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house the entrails of a goat which Mahomet, putting upon a stick, carried to the door, and called aloud: "Ye children of Abd Menáf! What sort of neighbourhood is this?" Then he cast it forth into the street.* Two or three centuries afterwards, a little closet, a few feet square, was still shown at the entrance of Khadija's house where, under the ledge of a projecting stone, the Prophet crouched down when he retired for prayer, to shelter himself from the missiles of his neighbours.† There is also a legend (but ill sustained,) of actual violence once offered to Mahomet in public. As he passed through the court of the Kaaba, he was suddenly surrounded by the Coreish, who "leaped upon him as one man," and seized his mantle. But Abu Bakr stood manfully by him and called out; "Woe's me! Will ye slay a man because he saith that *God is my Lord?*" So they departed from him.‡

In the sixth year of his mission, the cause of Mahomet was strengthened by the accession of two powerful citizens, HAMZA and OMAR.

Conversion of *Hamza*, 615 A.D.

The prophet was one day seated on the rising ground of Safa. Abu Jahl, coming up, accosted

* *Hishámi*, p. 134; *Tabari*, p. 148; *Kátib al Wáckidi*, p. 38. Besides Abu Lahab there are mentioned Ockba, son of Abu Mait; Al Hakam, son of Ab ul As: Adi the Thackifite; and Ibn al Asad, the Handalite; as living close by, and annoying the Prophet.

† *Tabari*, p. 67.

‡ *Hishámi*, p. 77; *Tabari*, p. 131. It is related that Abu Bakr had his beard pulled that day in the scuffle; and that Omm Kolthúm saw him return with an injury on the crown of his head

him with a shower of taunts and reproaches; while Mahomet answered not a word. Both left the place, but a slave girl had observed the scene.* It chanced that, shortly after, Hamza returned that way from the chase, his bow hanging from his shoulder, (for he was a hunter of renown); and the maid related to him with indignation the gross abuse of Abu Jahl. Hamza was at once the uncle of Mahomet and his foster-brother. His pride was offended, his rage kindled. He hurried on with rapid steps to the Kaaba; and there, in the Court of the Holy House, found Abu Jahl sitting with a company of the Coreish. Hamza rushed upon him, saying:—*Ah! hast thou been abusing him, and I follow his religion; there* (raising his bow and striking him violently,) *return that if thou darest!* The kinsmen of Abu Jahl started to his succour; but Abu Jahl motioned them away, saying, "Let him alone; for, indeed, I did revile his nephew shamefully." The profession of Islam, suddenly asserted by Hamza in the passion of the moment, was followed up by the deliberate pledging of himself to Mahomet, and a steady adherence ever after to his faith.†

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* The servant of the chief Abdallah ibu Jodáán, repeatedly mentioned before.

† *Hishámi*, p. 78; *Tabari*, p. 135; *Kitáb al Wáckidi*, p. 179½. The latter mentions the facts very briefly, but adds the names of Adi, and Ibn al Asad, to that of Abu Jahl, as having abused Mahomet. The conversion, he says, occurred after Mahomet's "entry into Arcam's house," in the sixth year of the Mission.

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Conversion of *Omar* 615-616.

The conversion of Omar took place at the close of the sixth year of Mahomet's mission.* He was notorious for his enmity to Islam, and the harshness and violence with which he treated its professors. His sister Fâtima and her husband Saîd (son of the "Enquirer" Zeid) were both converts, but secretly for fear of the Coreish. While Omar was threatening certain believers, a friend suggested to him that he had better begin at home, and hinted at the conversion of his sister and her husband. His wrath was aroused, and he proceeded forthwith to their house. They were listening to the twentieth Sura, which the slave Khobâb recited to them from a manuscript. The persecutor drew near, and overheard the low murmur of the reading. At the noise of his steps, Khobâb retired into a closet. *What sound was that I heard just now?* exclaimed Omar, entering angrily. "There was nothing," they replied. *Nay*, said he, swearing fiercely, *I hear that ye are renegades!* "But what, Oh Omar!" interposed his brother-in-law, "may there not be truth in another religion than thine?" The question confirmed the suspicions of Omar and, furiously

* It occurred in Dzul Hajj, the last month in the year. *Kâtib al Wâckîdi*, p. 232. It is there noted that the believers at that date amounted in all to forty men and ten women; or by other accounts, to forty-five men and eleven women.

A tradition has been quoted above (p. 118) that Omar was the last convert in the house of Arcam; and that the male converts then amounted to forty.

exasperated, he sprang upon Said and kicked him. His sister flew to the rescue. In the struggle her face was wounded, and began to bleed. Stung by the insult, she could no longer contain herself, and called aloud;—"Yes, we are converted: we believe in God and in his Prophet; now do thy worst upon us." When Omar saw her face covered with blood he was softened; and he asked to see the paper they had been reading. But his sister required that he should first cleanse himself; "for none," said she, "but the pure may touch it." So Omar arose and washed, and took the paper (for he could read); and when he had decyphered a part thereof, he exclaimed;—*How excellent is this discourse, and gracious!* Then came forth Khobab from his hiding place, and said;—"Oh Omar! I trust that the Lord hath verily set thee apart for himself, in answer to his Prophet; it was but yesterday I heard him praying thus,—*Strengthen Islam, Oh God, by Abul Hakam* (Abu Jahl), *or by Omar!*" Then said Omar, "Lead me unto Mahomet, that I may make known unto him my conversion." And he was directed to the house of Arcam. So Omar knocked at the door; and Hamza with others looked through a crevice, and started back, exclaiming that it was Omar. But Mahomet bade them let him in and, rising to meet him, seized his skirt and the belt of his sword, saying:—"Wilt thou not refrain from persecuting, until the Lord send

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some calamity upon thee?" And Omar replied;—"*Verily, I testify that thou art the Prophet of God!*" And Mahomet was filled with joy, and called aloud, GREAT IS THE LORD!*

* *Allahu Akbar!* This exclamation is styled the *Takbîr*, and is used on occasions of surprise, or the unexpected occurrence of any great event.

Hishâmi has *two* versions. One is similar to that given in the text; only it is stated that Omar was *on his way to slay Mahomet*, when he was diverted by an intimation of his sister's conversion. But this incident has probably been thrown in to add to the romantic colouring of the story. Besides its inherent improbability, it appears inconsistent with the immediately previous declaration in Hishâmi, that Omar was "softened" when he saw the believers preparing to emigrate to Abyssinia, and said,—"the Lord go with you." *Hishâmi*, p. 103.

The second version is entirely different. Here is Omar's own alleged account:—"I was far from the faith, and a man given to strong drink. In quest of companions one night, I repaired to the shop of the spirit-dealer, but I did not find him. Then I said, *I will go unto the Kaaba and compass it six or seven times.* So I went; and I found Mahomet praying there with his face towards Syria (*i.e.* looking towards Jerusalem as his Kibla). Then I said, *What if I stay and hear what he is saying; I will get me near unto him and listen, then I will startle and frighten him.* So I went up towards the black stone, and hid myself behind the Kaaba curtain, and walked along softly between it and the wall, while the Prophet was praying and repeating the Coran, till I reached the spot directly before him—there was nothing betwixt him and me but the curtain. And when I heard him repeating the Coran my heart softened thereat, and I wept and was converted. And when he had ended, I followed him on his way to his house, which was in the *Dâr al Wackfa* (now in the possession of Muâvia); and as I made up upon him, he heard my steps and recognized me, and thought that verily I had come to trouble him, until I unfolded unto him the truth. Then he praised God and said,—*Verily, O Omar! God hath directed thee.* And he touched my garment and prayed for me, that I might continue stedfast." *Hishâmi*, p. 106.

These conversions were a real triumph to Mahomet. Hamza and Omar both possessed, along with great bodily strength, an indomitable courage; which, added to their social advantages, gained for them an important influence at Mecca.* The heroism of Hamza, in the cause of Islam, earned for him the title, familiar to the present day, of *the Lion of God*. Omar had so commanding a stature, that he rose far above the crowd, as if he had been mounted. He was stout and fair, and somewhat ruddy. Impulsive and precipitate, his anger was easily aroused; and men feared him because of his uncertain and impetuous temper. At the period of his conversion he was but six-and-twenty;† yet so great and immediate was the influence of his accession upon the spread of Islam, that from this era is dated the commencement of its open and fearless profession at Mecca. Mahomet abandoned the house

Importance of these conversions.

Omar described.

This tradition is utterly inconsistent with the other. Yet it contains details which have all the freshness and semblance of truth, and there is no *apparent* reason why it should have been fabricated. It is a strong example of the strange uncertainty of unsupported tradition.

The version in the text is evidently the correct one, and is given both by Hishâmi and the Secretary of Wâckidi, with some variations, which show that each had separate and independent authority for it. *Hishâmi*, p. 103; *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 231.

* For Hamza, *Hishâmi*, p. 78. For Omar, *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 243.

† "He was born four years before the great (last?) battle of *Al Fijâr*, and was converted in Dzul Hajj, six years after the mission, aged twenty-six. His son Abd-Allah was then only six years old." *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 232.

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of Arcam. The Moslems no longer concealed their worship within their own dwellings, but with conscious strength and defiant attitude, assembled in companies about the Kaaba, performed their rites of prayer, and compassed the Holy House.* Their courage rose. Dread and uneasiness seized the Coreish.

Position and fears of the Coreish.

The Coreish, indeed, had cause for alarm. They were disquieted by the hospitable reception and encouragement of the refugees at the Abyssinian Court. An embassy of two of their chief men, laden with costly presents, had made a fruitless attempt to obtain their surrender.† What if the

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* *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 232; *Hishâmi*, pp. 105-108.

† An account of this embassy is given by Hishâmi (pp. 96-100), also briefly by Tabari (p. 186). The statement of the former is related by Dr. Sprenger in considerable detail (p. 191). The outline of the story is as follows.

Omm Salma (the widow of one of the refugees, afterwards married to Mahomet) states that the Coreish despatched Abdallah ibn Abi Rabia and Amr ibn al As, with rare presents (including stores of precious leather), for the Najashy. They first gained over the courtiers, then they presented their gifts to the Christian Prince,—saying, that "certain fools amongst their own people had left their ancestral faith; they had not joined Christianity, but had set up a new religion of their own. They had therefore been deputed by the Coreish to fetch them back." The courtiers supported their prayer, but the king said he would enquire farther into the matter in the presence of the accused. Now the refugees had agreed that they would not garble their doctrine, but, come what might, say nothing more nor less than their Prophet had taught them. So on the morrow they were summoned into the royal presence, where were also the bishops with their books open before them. The king enquired of the refugees the cause of their secession from the Coreish. Then Jafar (Mahomet's uncle) answered,

Najâshy should support them with an armed force, and seek to establish a Christian or reformed Faith

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in the name of all,—"that they used to worship images, eat the dead, commit lewdness, disregard family ties, the duties of neighbourhood and hospitality, until that Mahomet arose a prophet;" he concluded by describing his system, and the persecutions which had forced them to flee to Abyssinia. On the king asking him to repeat some part of the Prophet's teaching, he recited Sura *Maryam* (S. xix. containing the births of John and Jesus, notices of Abraham, Moses, &c.); and the king wept until his beard became moist; and the bishops also wept so that their tears ran down upon their books, saying,—"Verily, this Revelation and that of Moses proceed from one and the same source." And the Najâshy said to the refugees, "Depart in peace, for I will never give you up."

Next day, it is added, Amr endeavoured to entrap the refugees into a declaration regarding Jesus offensive to the king. But the king fully concurred in their doctrine that Jesus was nothing more than "a servant of God, and His Apostle; His Spirit and His word, placed in the womb of Mary, the immaculate Virgin." So the Meccan embassy departed in bad case.

The above story is no doubt intended to meet certain passages in the Coran to the effect that the Jews and Christians wept for joy on hearing the Revelation of Mahomet, because of its correspondence with their own Scriptures. See Sura xvii. 108; xxviii. 43. A similar tale has been invented for the bishops of Najrân; and also regarding an embassy of Christians from Abyssinia, who are said to have *visited Mahomet at Mecca*. *Hishâmi*, p. 122. So that not much reliance can be placed on this part of the narrative.

Two other incidents are related of the Najâshy. One, that while the refugees were at his court, he was attacked by a claimant of the throne. The refugees were so concerned for the result, that they sent Zobeir (then quite a youth) over the Nile on an inflated skin, to watch the battle; and when he returned with tidings that the Najâshy had discomfited his adversary, they rejoiced greatly.

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at Mecca, as one of his predecessors had done in Yemen? Apart even from foreign aid, there was ground for apprehension at home. The Moslem body no longer consisted of oppressed and despised out-casts, struggling for a weak and miserable existence. It was rather a powerful faction, adding daily to its strength by the accession of influential citizens. It challenged an open hostility. The victory of either party involved the annihilation of the other.

The Coreish cut off communications with the Moslems and their supporters.

Influenced by such fears, the Coreish sought to stay the progress of secession from their ranks, by utterly severing the party of Mahomet from social and friendly communication with themselves. On the other hand, Abu Tâlib was supported in his defence of Mahomet by all his brothers (excepting

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The Abyssinians are said to have risen up against their king on account of the favour he showed to the Mussulman doctrine. So the Najâshy put into his pocket a scrap inscribed with the Mahometan creed, and when his people desired him to say "that Jesus was the Son of God," he responded thus (putting his hand upon his pocket) "Jesus never went beyond *this*"—apparently agreeing in what they said, but inwardly referring to the scrap! —a childish story.

Mahomet is said to have regarded him as a convert to Islam; and to have accordingly prayed for him at his death. A light is also related to have issued from his tomb.

There is probably a basis of truth for the general outline given in this note; but it would be difficult to draw a probable line between the real and the fictitious parts of it. Had the leaning towards Mahometan doctrine been really so great in Abyssinia, as is here represented, we should have heard more of its inhabitants in the troublous times immediately following Mahomet's decease.

Abu Lahab,) and by the descendants generally of his grandfather Hâshim whether converts to Islam or not.* Thus the religious struggle merged for a time into a civil feud between the Hâshimites and the rest of the Coreish; and there were not wanting long-rooted political associations to add bitterness to the strife.

The Ban.

To secure their purpose, the Coreish entered into a confederacy against the Hâshimites;—*That they would not marry their women, nor give their own in marriage to them; that they would sell nothing to them, nor buy aught from them;—that dealings with them of every kind should cease.* The ban was carefully committed to writing, and sealed with three seals. When all had bound themselves by it, the record was hung up in the Kaaba, and religious sanction thus given to its provisions.†

* *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 40; *Hishâmi*, p. 72. Abu Tâlib summoned the house of Hâshim to consult as to the defence of their kinsman Mahomet. All agreed to stand by him but Abu Lahab. Abu Tâlib was charmed with the noble spirit of his relatives, and recited a Casida (preserved by Ibn Ishâc), in praise of the family. The verses, however, conclude with an eulogy on Mahomet as the chief and most noble of the stock—a sentiment which Abu Tâlib, not a convert to Islam, was not likely to have uttered. The Casida is evidently spurious, at least in part.

† *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 39½, 40; *Tabari*, p. 137; *Hishâmi*, p. 108. Mansûr, son of Ikrima, wrote the document; and the hand with which he wrote it (*at the prayer*, adds Hishâmi, *of Mahomet*) withered and dried up. Hishâmi states that it was he also who suspended the deed in the Kaaba. Wâckidi however gives another tradition, according to which it was never put in the Kaaba at all, but remained in the custody of Omm al Jalâs, an aunt or cousin of Abu Jahl.

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The Sheb, or *Quarter of* Abu Tâlib.

The Hâshimites were unable to withstand the tide of public opinion which set in thus violently against them; and, apprehensive perhaps that it might be only the prelude of open attack, or of blows in the dark still more fatal, they retired into the secluded quarter of the city, known as the *Sheb* of Abu Tâlib.* It was formed by one of the defiles or indentations of the mountain, where the projecting rocks of Abu Cobeis pressed upon the eastern outskirts of Mecca. It was entered on the city side by a low gateway, through which a camel passed with difficulty. On all other sides it was detached from the town by cliffs and buildings.†

* Sprenger (p. 194) holds that this movement was prior to, and independent of, the league of the Coreish (p. 189). But both Hishâmi and Wâckidi distinctly connect the ban and the entry *into* Abu Tâlib's quarter as cause and effect. And this is indeed the only intelligible statement of the facts.

† شعب *Sheb* signifies a *defile, valley, glen, ravine.* Thus the converts from Medina made their appointment to meet Mahomet in a glen, *Sheb*, leading into the valley of Mina; and the next day the enraged Coreish repaired to the *Sheb* of the Medina pilgrims, or the valley in which they were encamped. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 42½. The valley at Ohod, where Talha saved Mahomet, is termed *Sheb*. *Ibid.* p. 221; *Hishâmi*, p. 262; *Tabari*, p. 375, where the top or exit from the valley is called فم الشعب "*mouth* of the Sheb." Amr and his companion in their expedition to assassinate Abu Sofian, tied up their camels in one of the defiles (*Sheb*) near Mecca. *Hishâmi*, p. 451; *Tabari*, p. 405. So the end of a pass requiring to be guarded in the expedition of *Dzat al Rika*, is called "*fam al Sheb*." *Tabari*, p. 427. Before Cussey brought the Coreish into Mecca, they are said to have inhabited "the heights and defiles (*Sheb*) of the surrounding hills." *Tabari*, p. 29; *Cnf. C. de Perceval*, vol. ii. p. 478.

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On the first night of the first month of the seventh year of the prophetic life of Mahomet, the Hâshimites, including the Prophet and his family, retired into the quarter of Abu Tâlib; and with them followed also the descendants of Al Muttalib, the brother of Hâshim. Abu Lahab alone, instigated

The Hâshimites with Mahomet retire into the Sheb, 616-617 A.D.

Burton mentions a robber's gorge called "Shuab el Haj," the "Pilgrims' pass." In a note he adds,—"Shuab properly means a path through mountains, or a watercourse between hills. It is generally used in Arabia for a valley, and sometimes instead of Nakb, a pass." *Pilgrimage*, ii. 14.

The several quarters of Mecca skirting the foot of Abu Cobeis are still distinguished by the name *Sheb*: thus we have the *Sheb Amir*, the *Sheb Maulad* (quarter in which Mahomet was born), and the *Sheb Ali*. The latter was probably comprised in the *Sheb* of Abu Tâlib. *Burckhardt's Arabia*, pp. 123-128. "On the east side, towards the mountain, and partly on its declivity, stands the quarter called Shab Aly, adjoining the Shab el Moled: here is shown the venerated place of Aly's nativity. Both these quarters called Shab (*i.e.* rock), are among the most ancient parts of the town, where the Koreysh formerly lived: they are even now inhabited principally by Sherifs, and do not contain any shops. The houses are spacious and in an airy situation." *Ibid.* p. 124.

It was into one of these quarters of the city situated in a defile, having behind it the steep ascent of the hill, and so built about as to be inaccessible on all sides, except by a narrow entrance from the city, that the Hâshimites retired. These particulars enable us to understand the account of Hakim striking his camel to make it bow down and enter the narrow defile (فم الشعب); and the voices of the wailing children being heard in the parts of the city adjoining, but divided from, the Sheb.

Weil has misapprehended the meaning of "Sheb," and makes it a fortified castle *outside* Mecca. "Hielt es Abu Talib für gerathen, ihn mit einem Theile der Gläubigen aus Mekka zu entfernen, und in ein Wohlbefestigtes Schloss zu bringen." *Mohammed*, p. 61. So in his *Einleitung*, p. 9.

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by hatred of the new religion, went forth to the other party. The ban of separation was put rigorously in force. The Hâshimites soon found themselves cut off from their supplies of corn and the other necessaries of life. They were not strong enough to send forth a caravan of their own; if parties of foreign merchants passed through, the Coreish instigated them to withhold their commodities, except at a most exorbitant price;* the Coreish themselves would sell nothing to them: and a great scarcity ensued. No one ventured forth from the *Sheb*, except at the season of pilgrimage, when all enmities throughout Arabia were hushed, and Mahomet and his party were free to join securely in the ceremonies.† For two or three years, the attitude of both parties remained unaltered, and the failing stock of the Hâshimites, replenished only by occasional and surreptitious ventures, reduced them to want and distress. The citizens could hear the voices of the half-famished children crying within the Sheb. Many hearts were softened at the sight

Their distress.

* This is from Sprenger; but he does not give his authority, which I have not been able to trace (p. 194).

† *Kâtib al Wâckîdî*, p. 40. It is not clear whether this retirement was voluntary on the part of the Hâshimites, arising from their own alarm; or was directly forced upon them by the threats and menaces of the Coreish. Although they did not come forth from the *Sheb* into the *city*, they might still, we may conceive, issue from the quarter of Abu Tâlib, by clambering up the hill, and so getting out into the country. But they would be unable from the rugged and precipitous character of the rock to procure *supplies* in this way.

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of such hardships, and mourned over the hostilities which gave rise to them. Among these, and among the relatives of the isolated band, were found some who ventured, in spite of the threats of the Coreish, to introduce, from time to time, provisions by stealth at night into the quarter of Abu Talib. Thus Hishâm ibn Amr would conduct a camel laden with corn cautiously into the *Sheb*, and make over the burden to the hungry inmates.* Hakîm grandson of Khuweilid used also, though the attempt was sometimes perilous, to carry supplies to his aunt Khadîja.†

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* Hishâm belonged to the Bani Lowey, but he was the uterine brother of Fazila, a Hâshimite:—"Now this man used to go with a camel to the children of Hâshim and Muttalib, by night: and when he approached the entrance to their quarters (فم الشعب) he would let down the nose string of the camel from its head, and striking it on the side, would cause it to enter into the *Sheb*; making over to the inmates the corn wherewith it was laden." *Hishâmi*, p. 118.

† "The Hâshimites remained in this position for two or three years, till they became helpless. Not an article reached them, but covertly and by stealth, from such of the Coreish as were actuated by the ties of propinquity. On one occasion, Abu Jahl met Hakîm, grandson of Khuweiled, and with him a slave carrying wheat for his aunt Khadija. Abu Jahl stopped him, and, swearing at him, threatened that if he would not desist he would disgrace him in Mecca. Abul Bokhtari came up and sought to quiet Abu Jahl, saying that it was natural and right for Hakîm to take food for his aunt. Abu Jahl would not listen, but fell upon Hakîm; who, however, got the better of him, and forced him to retire kicked and wounded." *Hishâmi*, p. 109.

But stories tending to the abasement of Abu Jahl are related by the traditionists with such evident zest, that they are to be received by us with caution.

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Unfavourable effect of the seclusion on the cause of Mahomet.

Though the sympathies of many were called forth by the sufferings of the Hashimites, the cause of Islam itself did not advance during the period of this weary seclusion; for that seclusion had its full and expected effect in cutting off the mass of the people from the personal influence of Mahomet and of his converts. The efforts of the Prophet were necessarily confined to the conversion of the members of his own noble clan who, though unbelievers in his mission, had resolved to defend his person; and to the strengthening of his previous converts in the faith. Accordingly, we find in the portions of the Coran delivered at this time directions from God to retire from the unbelievers, and confine his preaching to his near kinsmen and to the faithful;—

* * * Verily they are a rebellious people;
Wherefore turn from them, and thou shalt not be blamed.
And admonish; for admonition profiteth the believers.*

* * * * *

Invoke with God no other god, lest thou be of those consigned to torment.
And preach unto thy Relatives, those that be of nearer kin.
And conduct thyself gently unto the Believers that follow thee.
And if they disobey thee, Say, *I am free from that which ye do.*
And put thy trust in Him that is glorious and merciful.†

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* Sura li. 55.

† Sura xxvi. 212. "Conduct thyself gently"—literally, *Lower thy wings*:— واخفض جناحك ,—The same expression is used in Sura xv. 88:—

Stretch not forth thine eyes unto the provision which we have given unto several of them, neither be covetous thereof.
But behave with gentleness (*lower thy wings*) unto the Believers;
And say, Verily, I am a plain Preacher.

The exemplary bearing of Mahomet under these trying circumstances, and the spirit of clanship uniting all that shut themselves up with him and Abu Talib, must undoubtedly have secured in some degree for the new religion itself, the general countenance of the Hâshimites, and may perhaps have helped to add some few followers from their ranks. But the weary years of confinement contributed probably no more important result.

But it drew him closer to the Hashimites.

The time of pilgrimage alone afforded Mahomet a wider field. That interval of universal amnesty was turned, (as it had indeed already been before the ban,) to careful account in visiting and exhorting the various tribes that flocked to Mecca and the adjacent fairs. Thus the Prophet used to visit the great assemblages at Okâtz, Mujanna, and Dzul Majâz, as well as the pilgrim encampments at Mecca and Minâ. He warned them against idolatry; invited them to the worship and service of the One God; and promised them not only paradise hereafter, but prosperity and dominion upon earth, if they would believe.* No one responded to his call.

Mahomet visits the fairs and assemblages of pilgrims.

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And publish that which thou art commanded, and withdraw from the Idolaters.

Verily, We shall suffice for thee against the scoffers, those that set up with God other gods; but they will shortly know;

But do thou praise thy Lord with thanksgiving, and be among the Worshippers:—

And serve thy Lord until death (*or the certainty*) overtake thee.

* *Hishâmi*, p. 139; *Kitâb al Wâckidi*, p. 41; *Tabari*, p. 155. Wâckidi mentions Mahomet's frequenting the three fairs stated in the text, *every* year. There is some foreshadowing of the

Abu Lahab would follow after him, saying;—*Believe him not, he is a lying renegade!** And the tribes replied to Mahomet in sore and taunting words:—*Thine own kindred and people should know thee best; wherefore, do they not believe and follow thee?* So the Prophet, repulsed and grieved, would look upwards and thus make his complaint unto God:—*Oh Lord, if Thou willedst, it would not be thus!*† But the prayer seemed to pass unheeded.

Is repulsed and dispirited.

victories of Islam in his supposed address, which rather throws doubt upon his having made any promise of worldly domination at this time. This was the alleged drift of his preaching: "*Ye People! Say,* THERE IS NO GOD BUT THE LORD. *Ye will be benefitted thereby. Ye will gain the rule of all Arabia, and of Ajam* (foreign lands), *and when ye die ye will reign as kings in Paradise.*

The tribes whom he thus addressed are detailed both by Hishâmi and Wâckidi, and include the Bani Kulb, Kinda, Harb, Odzra, Khassafa, Sâasâh, Ghassân, Hanifa; from the last of which he is related to have received the worst rebuff of all.

There would be numerous Christians and Jews *at the fairs*, though they did not attend the Meccan pilgrimage.

* "And behind him there followed a squint-eyed man, fat, having flowing locks on both sides, and clothed in raiment of fine Aden stuff. And when Mahomet had finished his preaching, this man would begin to address them, saying, that *this fellow's only object was to draw them away from their gods and genii, to his fancied revelations; wherefore follow him not, neither listen unto him.* And who should this be but his uncle Abdâl Ozza, Abu Lahab." *Hishâmi*, p. 140.

† *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 41½.

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SUPPLEMENT TO CHAPTER FIFTH.

The Coran as Revealed during this Period.

FOLLOWING the plan observed at the close of the last chapter I here propose to notice the character of the Suras, about *twenty* in number, assignable to the period just reviewed.*

Connection with Judaism.

The new and leading feature of these chapters is the close connection springing up between Mahomet and the Jewish religion.

Jewish Scriptures appealed to.

The Pentateuch is now constantly mentioned as a Revelation from God to Moses. The object of the Coran is "*to attest*" its divine origin and that of the succeeding Scriptures.† The Jewish books contain "*clear evidence*" of the truth of the Coran, and of the mission of Mahomet.‡ Jewish witnesses are appealed to in proof that the New Dispensation is "*foretold*" in their sacred books, and that the Coran is in close conformity with their contents.

Testimony and feelings of the Jews towards Mahomet.

The confidence with which Mahomet refers to the testimony of the Jews and of their Scriptures, is very remarkable. It leaves us no room to doubt that some amongst the Jews, possessed probably of an imperfect and superficial acquaintance with their own books and traditions, encouraged Mahomet in the idea that he might be, or positively affirmed that he was, *that Prophet whom the*

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* The approximate order of these will be given in an Appendix.

† See Suras xlvi. 12, 30; xxxvii. 38; xxxii. 24; x. 37, 93; vi. 93, *et passim*. The Coran is described as a book sent "to attest the *preceding Scriptures*." So the Jews and Christians (severally and together, but more especially, at this period, the former) are styled, "those to whom *the Scriptures* have been given." Thus it was the entire preceding Scriptures,—the Law the Prophets and the Psalms, and subsequently the Gospel,—which Mahomet continually described himself as sent to "attest," "confirm," "fulfil."

A complete collection of all the passages of this nature in the Coran will be found in a treatise by the author;—"*The testimony borne by the Coran to the Jewish and Christian Scriptures*." *Agra*, 1856.

‡ Sura xxvi. 195. "The Coran is borne witness to in the former Scriptures," &c.

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Lord their God should raise up unto them of their brethren. His profound veneration for the Jewish Scriptures, to the implicit observance of which there was then fair ground for assuming that he had pledged himself in the Coran, would lull the apprehension of the Israelites, and draw them kindly towards him. "If this *man*," they would say, "hold firmly by the Law and the Prophets, and seek fervently the guidance of the God of our fathers, he will not go astray. Peradventure, the Lord willeth through him to lead the heathen Arabs unto salvation. Nay! What if (we erring in our interpretation of prophecy as to the Jewish lineage of our expected prophet,) this prove the very Messiah sprung from the seed of Abraham? In anywise let us wait, watching the result; and meanwhile encourage him in the love of the Word of God, and the seeking of His face in prayer." All rejoiced in the Jewish tendencies which had possessed his mind.* Some going farther bore a direct and unequivocal testimony to his mission.† It could have been to nothing short of such witness that he referred, when he said—*They unto whom* WE *have given the Scripture recognize the Prophet*,‡ *as they do their own children*; and—

> Verily this is a Revelation from the Lord of Creation;
> The faithful Spirit hath descended with it
> Upon thy heart, that thou mightest be a Warner,
> In the tongue of simple Arabic.
> And verily it is in the former Scriptures:
> Was it *not* a Sign unto them that the learned among the Children of Israel recognised it?
> And if we had revealed it to a Foreigner,
> And he had recited it unto them, they had not believed.§
>
> SAY: What think ye, if this Revelation be from God, and ye reject it, and a witness from amongst the Children of Israel hath witnessed unto the like thereof, and hath believed, and *ye* turn away scornfully?—Verily, God doth not direct the erring folk.‖

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* "Those unto whom we have given the Book *rejoice* for that which hath been revealed unto thee." Sura xiii. 39.

† See Suras xxxiv. 6; x. 93; vi. 14; xxviii. 53; xvii. 102, 108; xiii. 45.

‡ Or "recognize *the Coran*." Sura vi. 20.

§ Sura xxvi. 191–198.

‖ Sura xlvi. 10. "*Unto the like thereof*," that is, to its conformity with the Old Testament.

Conjectures as to the "witness."

Whether the "Witness," and other Jewish supporters of Mahomet, were among his professed followers, slaves perhaps, at Mecca; or were casual visitors there from Israelitish tribes; or belonged to the Jewish residents of Medina (with the inhabitants of which city the Prophet was on the point of establishing friendly relations), we cannot do more than conjecture.

The Jews supply Mahomet with materials for the Coran.

But whoever his Jewish friends may have been, it is evident that they had a knowledge—rude and imperfect perhaps, but comprehensive,—of the outlines of Jewish history and tradition. These, distorted by rabbinical fable, and embellished or parodied by the Prophet's fancy, supplied the material for the Scriptural stories, which begin to form a chief portion of the Coran. The mixture of truth and fiction, of graphic imagery and of childish inanity, the repetition over and over again of the same tale in stereotyped expression, and the constant elaborate and ill-concealed effort to draw an analogy between himself and the former prophets by putting the speech of his own day into their lips and those of their pretended opposers, fatigue and nauseate the patient reader of the Coran.

Correspondence, and disagreement with the Old Testament.

To those who have not studied the Revelation of Mahomet, the following examples may be useful as illustrating both its remarkable correspondence with the Jewish Scriptures, and the strange and fanciful deviations from them. The fabulous turn of the stories can often be traced to Rabbinical legend.

Illustrations.

God created Adam of clay, and commanded the angels to fall down and worship him.* The devil, alleging his nobler formation from fire, refused and fell.† On receiving his sentence, he threatened God that he would seduce His new-created subjects; and, in tempting them to eat of the forbidden tree, he fulfilled his threat.‡

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* Compare *Ps.* xcvii. 7; *Hebrews*, i. 6. "When he bringeth the first-born into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him."

† "His ministers a flaming fire." *Ps.* civ. 4; *Heb.* i. 7.

‡ Sura ii. 11-26; xx. 113; xxxviii. 70. [illegible] of these passages may be quoted as a fair specimen of the [illegible] of legendary style.

> And verily we created you, then fashioned you, then We said unto the Angels, "Fall down and worship Adam;" and they worshipped all, excepting Eblis, who was not one of the worshippers;—

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To the facts of Abel's history, is added the Jewish fiction that God, by sending a raven to scratch the ground, indicated to Cain that the corpse should be buried under the earth.* It would

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He said "What hindereth thee that thou worshippest not when I command thee?" He answered,—"I am better than he, Thou createdst me of Fire, and Thou createdst him of clay."

He said, "Get thee down from Heaven; it shall not be given thee to behave arrogantly therein; get thee hence, verily, thou shalt be amongst the Despicable."

He said, "Respite me unto the Day when (all) shall be raised."

He said, "Verily, thou art of the number respited."

He said, "Now, for that Thou hast caused me to fall, I will lie in wait for them in the straight path;

Then I will fall upon them from before and from behind, and from their right hand and from their left; and Thou shalt not find the most part of them thankful."

He said, "Depart from hence, despised and driven off: for those of them that shall follow thee,—verily, I will fill hell with you together!

And thou, Adam, dwell thou and thy Wife in Paradise, and eat from whatever quarter ye will, but approach not this Tree, lest ye become of the number of the Transgressors!"

And the Devil tempted them both that he might discover that which was hidden from them of their Nakedness.

And he said, "Your Lord hath only forbidden you this Tree, lest ye should become Angels, or become Immortal."

And he swore unto them, "Verily, I am unto you one that counselleth good."

And he misled them by ambitious Desire; and when they had tasted of the Tree, their Nakedness appeared unto them, and they began to sew together upon themselves the leaves of Paradise.

And their Lord called unto them, "What! did I not forbid you this Tree, and say unto you that Satan was your manifest Enemy?"

They said, "Oh, our Lord! We have injured our own Souls, and if Thou forgivest us not, and art not merciful unto us, we shall be numbered amongst the Damned."

He said, "Get ye down, the one of you an Enemy to the other, and there shall be unto you on the Earth an habitation and a provision for a season."—

He said, "Therein shall ye live, and therein shall ye die, and from thence shall ye be taken."

The expression in the penultimate verse seems to be taken from *Genesis* iii. 15. "And I will put enmity," &c.

* Sura v. 33. See Geiger's *Was hat Mahomed aus Judenthume*, &c. p. 103; where he quotes *R. Eliezer, Rap.* 21, for the Jewish tradition to

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be a vain and unprofitable task to follow Mahomet through his labyrinth of truth, discrepancy, and fiction. It will suffice if I but allude to the stories of Abraham, who brake the idols of his people, and miraculously escaped the fire into which the Tyrant cast him;* of the angel's visit, when "Sarah laughed" at the promise of a son; and the Patriarch, vainly pleading for Sodom, was told that though Lot would be saved, his wife was predestined to destruction;† of Abraham's hand being stayed from the sacrifice of his son, who was ransomed by "a noble victim;"‡ of Joseph; in envy of whose beauty the Egyptian women cut their hands with knives;§ of Jacob, who when the garment of Joseph was cast over him by the messengers from Egypt, recovered his long lost sight;‖ of Mount Sinai held above the heads of the terrified Israelites to force their acceptance of the law: of the Seventy who, when struck dead upon the same mount, were quickened to life again;¶ of David, whom the mountains joined in singing the praises of God: and of Solomon, on whose gigantic works the Genii and Devils were forced to labour at his bidding: of the Genii, who brought the throne of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon in "the twinkling of an eye," and of the lap-wing that flew to her with the royal summons;** of the Jews who broke the Sabbath, and were changed into apes;†† of Ezekiel who quickened a great mul-

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the same effect. But in the Jewish tradition the raven shows the mode of burial to *Adam*; in the Coran, to *Cain* the murderer.

* Sura xxi. 52, &c. See the quotations from the Jewish Commentator Rabbah of similar legends, in *Geiger*, p. 124.

† Sura xi. 69; xv. 50; xxvii. 58, &c.

‡ Sura xxxvii. 84. Which son it was is not specified in the Coran. See above, p. 155, note.

§ Sura xii. Mahomet makes Joseph to have been inclined towards Potiphar's wife, and only saved from impending sin by a Divine interposition; Sura xii. 25. So the Rabbin Jochanan; *Geiger*, p. 142. The ladies' cutting their hands is also mentioned in the Sepher Hayyashar. *Ibid.*

‖ Sura xii. 93–96.

¶ Sura ii. 55, 63, 93; iv. 153; vii. 172. For the analogous rabbinical legend, see *Geiger*, p. 165.

** Sura xxvii. 16–45; xxxiv. 10–14; xxxviii. 18, 42. For the Jewish legends of similar nature, see *Geiger*, p. 185–187.

†† Sura vii. 164.

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tude of the dead:* and of Ezra who with his ass was raised to life after they had been dead one hundred years.† Some favourite passages in the sacred record are the subject of special amplification and frequent repetition. Such are the history of Moses, the catastrophe of the Flood, and the overthrow of Sodom, through which the Arabian Prophet, ever recurring to them with a wearisome reiteration, seeks to deal forth exhortation and warning to the Meccans. A true conception of these curious recitals can be gained only from a perusal of the Coran itself. If the reader desire a specimen, and have patience and interest for the tedious detail, let him refer to the history of Moses in the twentieth and twenty-eighth Suras.

Time spent in study and composition.

To acquire so minute a knowledge of considerable portions of the Jewish Scriptures, to assimilate these to his former materials, and to work them up into the elaborate and rhythmical Suras which begin now to extend to a considerable length, it was necessary to devote much time and careful study. The revelation is now seldom the spontaneous and impassioned eloquence of a burning Faith: it *is* rather the tame and laboured result of ordinary composition. For this end many a midnight hour must have been stolen from sleep,—though ostensibly devoted to prayer and the recitation of God's word. Such employment is probably referred to in passages like the following;—

> Oh thou that art wrapped up?
> Arise during the Night, excepting a small portion thereof:—
> A Half of it, or diminish therefrom a little,
> Or add thereto. And recite the Coran with well measured recitation.
> Verily, We shall inspire thee with weighty words.
> Verily, the hours of Night are the best for fervent maceration, and distinct utterance.
> Truly by Day thou hast a protracted Labour.
> And commemorate the name of thy Lord, and consecrate thyself solely unto Him.‡

* Sura ii. 244. The name of Ezekiel is not given. But the germ of the legend seems to lie in the vision of the Resurrection of the Dry Bones. *Ezekiel*, xxxvii. 1–10. See *Geiger*, p. 193, who traces it to the Talmud. *Sanhed.* p. 92.

† Sura ii. 260. The name is not given, but commentators are agreed it was *Ozair* or Ezra. Both Sale (*in loco*) and Geiger, (p. 195) as well as Maracci (vol. i. p. 98) connect the story with Nehemiah's circuit of the ruined city. *Nehemiah* ii. 12.

‡ Sura lxxiii. 1–7.

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It is possible that the convictions of Mahomet may have become so blended with his grand object and course of action, that the very *study* of the Coran, and effort to compose it, were regarded as his best season of devotion. But the stealthy and disingenuous manner in which he now availed himself of Jewish information, producing the result, not only as original, but *as evidence of inspiration*,* begins to furnish proof of an active, though it may have been unconscious, course of dissimulation and falsehood, to be palliated only by the miserable apology of a pious end.

Mahomet may have deceived himself into blending study and inspiration together.

On this weak point his enemies were not slow to seize. They accused him of fabrication, and of being assisted therein by others; —"They are fables" said they "of the ancients which he hath had written down; they are dictated unto him morning and evening." To these most damaging imputations Mahomet could only answer; —"He hath revealed it who knoweth that which is hidden in heaven and in earth: He is forgiving and merciful."†

Imputations of his enemies.

Up to this period there is hardly any mention of the *Christian Scriptures*. The available sources of information regarding them were probably as yet imperfect.

Christian Scriptures little mentioned as yet.

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* See Sura xxxviii. 70. The story of Man's Creation, and the Fall of Satan, is thus prefaced:—"*I had no knowledge regarding the Heavenly Chiefs when they disputed; verily, it hath been revealed unto me for no other purpose than* (to prove) *that I am a public Preacher.*" So Sura xxviii. 45–47, regarding the story of Moses at the Mount. Also xii. 102, after relating the history of Joseph, he adds, "*This is one of the secret histories, which we have revealed unto thee; thou was not present with them,*" &c. Compare Sura xxv. 34:—"*And they shall not come unto thee with any parable,* (i.e. hard question,) *but I will bring thee the truth,* (in answer,) *and a most excellent interpretation.*"

† Sura xxv. 4–6.

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CHAPTER SIXTH.

From the Tenth Year of the Mission of Mahomet to the Hegira; viz. from the Fiftieth to the Fifty-third Year of his Life.

Mahomet and his party remained in the *Sheb* of Abu Tâlib for three years,—from 617-618 to 619-620 A.D.

In the beginning of the tenth year of his Mission (the fiftieth of his life), Mahomet and his kinsmen were still shut up in the isolated quarter of Abu Tâlib. The only interval of freedom and relief, as has been already stated, occurred at the annual pilgrimage. Buying and selling, giving and receiving in marriage—all the intercourse of social life, was totally suspended between them and the rest of the Coreish. The Hâshimites were thus virtually blockaded for the space of two or three years.

The sympathy of their opponents excited.

At last the sympathies of a numerous section of the Coreish were aroused. They saw in this form of persecution something more than a conscientious struggle against an impostor. The justice of extending the ban to the whole Hâshimite stock seemed doubtful. Many, especially those related to the family, began to grieve at the rupture.

Abu Tâlib acquaints the Coreish that

It was discovered by some of the friends of Mahomet that the parchment in the Kaaba, on

which the ban was engrossed, had been almost entirely devoured by insects. The important news was told to Mahomet; and Abu Tâlib resolved to found thereon an effort for the dissolution of the league. The venerable chief, now more than four-score years of age,* issued forth from his closed quarter, and proceeded, with a band of followers, to the Kaaba. Addressing the chief men of the Coreish, as usual assembled there, he said,—"Intelligence hath reached me that your parchment hath been eaten up of insects. If my words be found true, then desist from your evil designs; if false, I will deliver up Mahomet that ye may do with him as ye list." The whole company agreed that it should be thus. So they sent for the document; and when they had opened it out, they saw that it was even as Abu Tâlib had said; a great part had been devoured by white-ants and was no longer legible. Abu Tâlib, perceiving their confusion, bitterly upbraided them with inhumanity and breach of social obligation. He then advanced with his band to the Kaaba, and standing behind the curtain, prayed to the Lord of the Holy House for deliverance from their machinations. Having done this, he retired again to his abode.

their deed has been eaten by insects; and upbraids them.

The murmurs of the party that favoured the Hâshimites, now found an opportunity of effective utterance. The partizans of the Prophet were

The Hâshimites released from their imprisonment 619-620 A.D.

* *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 23.

emboldened. The Coreish had hardly recovered from surprise at the sudden appearance and sudden departure of Abu Tâlib, when five chief men rose up from their midst, and declaring themselves inimical to the league, put on their armour, and proceeded to the quarter of Abu Tâlib. Standing by, they commanded all that had taken refuge there to go forth to their respective homes in security and peace. So they went forth in the tenth year of the Prophet's mission. The Coreish, confounded by the boldness of the stroke, offered no opposition. They perceived that a strong party had grown up who would resent by arms any attempt to lay violent hands upon the Moslems.*

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* Among the five chiefs was Abul Bokhtari, whose safety in return Mahomet vainly endeavoured to secure at Badr. Another was Zohair, a maternal grandson of Abd al Muttalib. A third was Mutim, who shortly afterwards took the Prophet under his protection on his return from Tayif. See below.

The version in the text is chiefly from the Secretary of Wâckidi, (p. 40,) with the omission only of the fiction that *God had communicated to his prophet* the information that the document had been eaten up all *except the words "in the name of God,"* with which (according to the ancient Meccan custom, *Tabari*, p. 147,) it commenced, and that Abu Tâlib told this to the Coreish.

Two separate traditions are given both by Hishâmi and Tabari. One as above. The other that the five chiefs had preconcerted a plan for the dissolution of the league. Repairing to the place of concourse, each began, as if independently, to speak against the ban, and the Coreish were already influenced by their appeal, when Mutim arose to tear up the document, and found that it had been eaten up. *Hishâmi*, p. 118; *Tabari*, p. 145.

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Repose and liberty followed the breaking up of the hostile league; but they were not long to be enjoyed by Mahomet. In a few months he was visited by trials more severe than any that had yet befallen him. The tenth year of his mission (the third before the Hegira) had not yet passed when Khadîja died; and five weeks later he lost his protector Abu Tâlib also.* Domestic trials;

I have endeavoured to weave both versions into the likeliest historical form. Weil supposes the document to have been destroyed during the night by some partizan of Mahomet. But this could hardly have been done. The ravages of white ants are not thus easily counterfeited: they have a peculiar appearance.

* The authorities regarding these dates are contradictory, and we must be content with probabilities.

The Kâtib al Wâckidi says (p. 23,) that Khadîja died *after* Abu Tâlib a month and five days: Ibn Coteiba also, that she died *after* him three days. The authorities, however, quoted in the Mowâhibailadonîya, give Ramadhân (December 619,) as the date of Khadîja's death, and Shawwâl (January 620,) for that of Abu Tâlib. Sprenger is not clear; in one place (p. 196, note 2,) he says that "Khadîja died *after* Abu Tâlib;" but in the next page, "one month and five days after his wife he lost his uncle and protector, the noble-minded Abu Tâlib."

The middle of Shawwâl is the date generally agreed upon for Abu Tâlib's decease (*Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 23); and the end of the same month, or about a fortnight later, as the period when Mahomet, downcast and distressed by the *two* bereavements, set out for Tâyif. We must therefore either suppose that Khadîja died within this fortnight, *i.e.* within the last fifteen days of Shawwâl, or that she died *before* Abu Tâlib. Ibn Coteiba's tradition that she died three days after Abu Tâlib, would be consistent with the former supposition. But this is unlikely; and moreover the interval between the two deaths is generally represented as thirty-five days. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, pp. 23, 40.

Death of Khadija, December, 619 A.D.

The death of his wife was a grievous affliction. For five-and-twenty years she had been his counsellor and support; and now his heart and home were left desolate. His family however no longer needed her maternal care. The youngest daughter, Fâtima, was approaching womanhood,* and an attachment was perhaps already forming with Ali, her father's nephew and adopted son. Though Khadija (at her death threescore and five years old) must long ago have lost the charms of youth, and though the custom of Mecca allowed polygamy, yet Mahomet was, during her lifetime, restrained from other marriages by affection and gratitude, and perhaps also by the wish to secure more entirely for his cause the influence of her family. His grief at her death at first was inconsolable, for he was liable to violent and deep emotion; but its effects were transient. The place of Khadija could be filled, though her devotion and virtues might not be rivalled, by numerous successors.†

In this view, it seems more natural to adopt the alternative that she died in the first half of Ramadhân (December 619); that Abu Tâlib died in the middle of Shawwâl (January 620); and that Mahomet, overcome by despondency at these successive bereavements, and by the renewed opposition of the Coreish, set out for Tayif the end of the latter month.

She would be then about twelve or thirteen years of age.

She was buried in the cemetery of Mecca, (afterwards called Jannat al Maala,) to the north-west of the city. See *Burton's Description of the Tomb* which is visited by pilgrims, vol. iii. p. 351.

Death of Abu Tâlib, January 620 A.D.

The loss of Abu Tâlib, who lived and died an unbeliever, was, if possible, a still severer bereavement. We may dismiss without much attention the legend that on his deathbed, in reply to the earnest appeal of his nephew, he declared that he was prevented from giving his assent to the creed of Islam only because he feared the imputation of terror at the approach of death.* Whatever he may have said to comfort Mahomet, his whole life belies the accusation that the apprehended contempt of the Coreish restrained him from avowing his convictions. The sacrifices to which Abu Tâlib exposed himself and his family for the sake of his nephew, while yet incredulous of his mission, stamp his character as singularly noble and unselfish. They afford at the same time strong proof of the sincerity of Mahomet. Abu Talib would not have acted thus for an interested deceiver; and he had ample means of scrutiny.

The loss of Abu Talib severely felt.

When the patriarch felt that life was ebbing, he summoned his brethren, the sons of Abd al Muttalib, around his bed, commended his nephew to their protection; and, relieved of this trust, died in peace.† Mahomet wept bitterly for his uncle;

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* See *Weil's Mohammad*, p. 67, note 79; and *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 22¼.

† "After his death Mahomet prayed for his salvation; but he had not yet gone forth from the house, when Gabriel descended with the verse forbidding to pray for unbelievers who have died

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and not without good reason. For forty years he had been the prop of his childhood, the guardian of his youth, his tower of defence in later life. The place of Khadîja might be supplied, but not that of Abu Tâlib. His very unbelief rendered his influence the stronger. So long as he survived, Mahomet needed not to fear violence or attack. But there was no strong hand now to protect him from his foes.

Abu Lahab for a short time protects Mahomet.

Grieved and dispirited by these bereavements following so closely one upon the other, and dreading the unrepressed insolence of the Coreish, Mahomet kept chiefly at home, and seldom went abroad.* The dying behest of Abu Tâlib had now an unex-

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in scepticism. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 23. See also *Sura* ix. 115. This verse however occurs in one of the latest Suras; there is no reason to believe that the rule enunciated in it had yet been given forth before the Hegira, though the system was fast tending towards it.

It is also said that Mahomet wept and commanded Ali to wash his father's corpse, and place it in the winding sheet, and bury him. *Kâtib al Wâckidi, Ibid.* But this looks like one of the Alyite traditions, which would refer all important commissions to Ali. It is not probable that the last services to a man of Abu Tâlib's position, surrounded by brothers and sons, would be left to Ali alone, acting under Mahomet's orders.

* *Ibid.* p. 40; *Hishâmi*, p. 138; *Tabari*, p. 140. The two latter say that the indignities he suffered at this time were so great that on one occasion the populace cast dirt upon his head. He returned to his house in this plight: one of his daughters arose to wipe off the dirt, and she wept. And Mahomet said, "*My daughter, weep not! for verily the Lord will be thy father's helper.*" They add that he suffered no such indignity as that while Abu Tâlib lived.

pected effect; for Abu Lahab, heretofore the avowed enemy of Mahomet, was softened by his despondency and distress, and spontaneously became his guardian. "*Do*," he said, "*as thou hast been in the habit of doing, while Abu Tôlib was yet with us. By Lât! no one shall hurt thee while I live.*" But the generous pledge was not long observed. Abu Lahab was gained over by the Coreish to their party, and Mahomet left to protect himself as he best could.*

Critical position of Mahomet.

The position of the Arabian Prophet now was critical. He must either gain the ascendancy at Mecca, abandon his prophetical claims, or perish in the struggle. Islam must either destroy idolatry, or idolatry must destroy Islam. Things could not remain stationary. His followers, though devotedly attached, and numbering a few *once* influential citizens, were but a handful against a host. Open

* This curious episode is given in detail by the Kâtib al Wâckidi, (p. 40). At first when Ibn Ghaitala abused Abu Lahab as a renegade for taking the part of Mahomet, the Coreish admitted the excuse of Abu Lahab, and even praised him for his attempt "to bind up family differences." But shortly after Ocba and Abu Jahl told him to ask in what place Abd al Muttalib was; and on Mahomet's confessing that he was in Hell, Abu Lahab left him in indignation, saying,—"I will not cease to be thine enemy for ever!"

Whatever may have been the immediate cause, it is evident that Abu Lahab soon was led again to abandon his nephew through the instigation of the evil-disposed Coreish.

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hostilities, notwithstanding every endeavour to prevent them, might any day be precipitated, and ruin irretrievably his cause. The new faith had not been gaining ground at Mecca. There had been no conversions, none at least of any note, since those of Omar and Hamza, three or four years before. A few more years of similar discouragement, and his chance of success was gone.

He resolves to make trial of the Banî Thackîf at Tâyif.

Urged by such reflections as these, Mahomet began to look around him. The Meccans knew not the day of their visitation, and had well nigh sealed their doom. It was perhaps the will of the Lord that succour and salvation should come from some other people. Tâyif (sixty or seventy miles to the east of Mecca) was the nearest city of importance. It might be that God would turn the hearts of its inhabitants, the idolatrous Thâckifites, and use them as his instruments to chastise the Meccans, and establish his religion on the earth. To them, accordingly, he resolved to deliver his message.

His journey thither. January and February, 620 A.D.

Abu Tâlib had been buried hardly a fortnight, when Mahomet, followed only by the faithful Zeid, set out on his adventurous mission.* His road (as far as Arafat it was the pilgrim's route) lay over

* Hishâmi, (p. 186,) and Tabari, (p. 1429,) say that he went entirely alone;—but the Kâtib al Wackidi, (p. 404,) that he was accompanied by Zeid, who was wounded in attempting to defend his master. As to the date, the latter says "there were still some days of Shawwâl remaining," when he started.

dismal rocks and through barren defiles for about forty miles, when it emerged on the crowning heights of Jebel Kora, with its rich gardens and charming prospect. Thence, descending through fertile valleys, the smiling fruits and flowers of which suggested perhaps the bright picture of the conversion of the Thâckifites, he advanced to their city. Though connected by frequent intermarriage, the inhabitants of Tâyif were jealous of the Coreish.* They had a *Lât*, or chief idol, of their own. It might be possible, by appealing to their national pride, as well as to their conscience, to enlist them on the side of Islam against the people of Mecca. Mahomet proceeded to the three principal men of the city, who were brothers;† and, having explained his mission, invited them to claim the honour of sustaining the new faith, and supporting him in the face of his hostile tribe. But he failed in producing conviction. They cast in his teeth the common objections of his own people, and advised that he should seek protection in some other quarter.‡

He fails in gaining over its chief men;

* They were descended from a common ancestor with the Coreish, Modhar, (B.C. 31,) See Introduction, chap. iii. p. cxcvi. In illustration of their independent and antagonistic position, see their hostile conduct in siding with Abraha in his invasion of Mecca. Introduction, chap. iv. p. cclxiii.

† One of them had a Coreishite wife of the Bani Jumh, a branch which contained many adherents of Islam, and must therefore have been intimately acquainted with the politics of Mecca and the claims and position of Mahomet.

‡ Hishâmi has given the words of each of the brothers, but they are probably imaginary, p. 137.

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and is ignominiously expelled the city.

Mahomet remained in Tâyif for about ten days; but, though many of the influential men came at his call, no hopeful impression was made upon them. Thus repulsed, he solicited one favour only, that they would not divulge the object of his visit, for he feared on his return the taunts and aggravated hostility of the Coreish. But this, even if it had been possible, the men of Tâyif were little likely to concede. For the first few days, perhaps, the common people regarded with awe the Prophet who had turned Mecca upside down, and whose preaching probably many had heard at the pilgrimage or fairs. But the treatment he was receiving at the hands of their Chiefs, and the disproportion to the outward eye between the magnitude of his claims and his solitary helpless condition, turned fear into contempt. They were stirred up to hasten the departure of the unwelcome visitor. They hooted him in the streets; they pelted him with stones; and at last they obliged him to flee out of their city, pursued by a relentless rabble. Blood flowed from wounds in both his legs; and Zeid, endeavouring to shield him, received a severe injury in his head. The mob did not desist until they had chased him two or three miles across the sandy plain to the foot of the hills that surround the city. There, wearied and mortified, he took refuge in one of the numerous orchards, and rested under a vine.*

* "The town is celebrated all over Arabia for its beautiful gardens: but these are situated at the foot of the mountains which

Hard by was the garden of two of the Coreish, Otba and Sheyba; for the wealthy Meccans had their pleasure grounds (as they still have) near Tâyif.* They watched the flight of Mahomet; and, moved with compassion, sent a tray of grapes for his refreshment.† Their slave, a Christian from Nineveh, who brought the fruit to him, was charmed by the pious style of the Prophet's address; and Mahomet was perhaps solaced more by the humble devotion of Addâs than by the grateful shade and juicy grapes.‡ After a little, composed and re-assured, he Rests at a garden in the outskirts.

encircle the sandy plain. I did not see any gardens, nor even a single tree within the walls; and the immediate neighbourhood is entirely destitute of verdure." The nearest gardens appeared to be on the S. W. side, at the distance of about half or three quarters of an hour." *Burkhardt's Travels in Arabia*, p. 85.

The quarter from which Mahomet made his escape would be the west: so that he would probably have at least some three miles of sandy plain to cross before he secured his retreat to one of the gardens.

* *Ibid.* p. 85.

† Burkhardt "tasted at Tâyif grapes of a very large size and delicious flavour. The gardens are also renowned for the abundance of their roses." *Ibid.* The gardens on the eminences of Jebel Kora also abound in vines "the produce of which is of the best quality," besides a variety of other fruits. *Ibid.* p. 54. The grapes were ripe when the traveller passed in the months of August and September; the visit of Mahomet was (according to M. C. de Perceval's calculations,) about four months later.

‡ The story of Addâs is not in the Kâtib al Wâckidi. Hishâmi and Tabari gave it with many fanciful additions. When Addâs offered the grapes, Mahomet exclaimed, "*In the name of God,*" as he stretched forth his hand to receive them. "Is this the mode of speech," asked the slave, "of the people of this country?"

betook himself to prayer, and the following touching and plaintive petitions are still preserved as those in which his burdened soul gave vent to its distress. "Oh Lord!* I make my complaint unto Thee of the feebleness of my strength, and the poverty of my expedients; and of my insignificance

His prayer.

"And of what country" said Mahomet "art thou, and what is thy religion?" "A Christian of the people of Nineveh." "Ah!" replied Mahomet, "the people of the righteous Jonas the son of Mattai!" "And, what" rejoined the slave, "hath made thee acquainted with Jonas son of Mattai?" "He was my brother; for he was a prophet, and I too am a prophet." Whereupon Addâs fell to kissing the head and hands and feet of Mahomet, to the astonishment of his masters who were looking on from a distance.

The story in this form is of course apocryphal; and I should have omitted the incidents regarding Addâs altogether, but that it is difficult to conceive how they could have found their way into this particular part of the history, without *some* foundation of fact. It is probable therefore that Mahomet did meet and converse with a Christian slave on this occasion.

* Zeid may have overheard and repeated the petitions; but we cannot, of course, place much confidence in the traditions which hand down this prayer. It is thus given by Hishâmi, (p. 187,) and Tabari, (p. 151).

اللهم اليك اشكو ا ضعف قوتي و قلة حيلتي و هواني على الناس * يا ارحم الراحمين انت رب المستضعفين و انت ربي * الى من تكلني الى بعيد يتهجمني او الى عدو ملكته امري ان * لم يكن بك علي غضب لا ابالي و لكن عافيتك هي اوسع لي * اعوذ بنور وجهك الكريم الذي اشرقت له الظلمات و صلح عليه امر الدنيا و الاخرة من ان ينزل بي غضبك او تحل علي سخطك * لك العتبى حتى ترضى و لا حول و لا قوة الا بك *

before Mankind. Oh Thou most Merciful! thou art the Lord of the weak, and thou art my Lord. Into whose hands wilt thou abandon me? Into the hands of the strangers that beset me round? or of the enemy to whom thou hast given the mastery over me? If *Thy* wrath be not upon me, I have no concern; but rather thy favour is the more wide unto me. I seek for refuge in the light of thy gracious countenance, by which the darkness is dispersed, and peace ariseth both for this world and the next, that thy wrath light not upon me, nor thine indignation. It is thine to show anger until Thou art pleased; and there is not any power or resource but in Thee."

Audience of the Genii at Nakhla.

Re-invigorated by the pause, he set forth on his journey homewards. About half way, loth to return to Mecca, he halted in the valley of Nakhla, where was an idol-temple, a grove, and a garden.*

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* *Nakhla* was a valley about half-way between Mecca and Tâyif. It is famous as the scene of the first expedition planned by Mahomet against the Meccans in which blood was shed. In describing it on that occasion, the Kâtib al Wâckidi says, "the valley of Nakhla is a garden of Ibn Amir, near to Mecca." But the *nearness* has reference only to Medîna, from which the expedition proceeded, and is quite consistent with the assumed position half-way between Mecca and Tâyif.

There was there an image of *Uzza*, held in estimation by the Coreish and other tribes, and destroyed after the taking of Mecca. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 129; *Hishâmi*, p. 371; *M. C. de Perceval*, vol. i. p. 269, vol. iii. p. 241. Its position is farther marked by the "engagement of Nakhla" in the sacrilegious war during the youth of Mahomet. The Hawâzin pursued the Coreish from the

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There, as he arose at night to prayer, or perhaps as he dreamed, his nervous and excited imagination pictured crowds of Genii pressing forward to hear his exhortations, and ardent to embrace Islam. The romantic scene has been thus perpetuated in the Coran:—

"And call to mind when We caused a company of the Genii to turn aside unto thee that they might listen to the Coran. When they were present at the recitation thereof, they said *Give ear*. And when it was ended, they returned unto their people, preaching. They said,—Oh our People! verily we have been listening to a Book which hath been sent down since Moses, attesting the Truth of the Scripture preceding it. It guideth unto the Truth, and into the straight Path. Oh our People! Obey the Summoner from God, and believe in him, that He may forgive you your sins, and save you from an awful punishment."*

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fair of Ocaiz to this spot, which was within the sacred limits around Mecca, or at least close upon them;—See chap. ii. p. 2; *M. C. de Perceval*, vol. i. p. 307.

It may probably be the same as the "Wady Mohram," noticed by Burkhardt as the point in the direction of Tâyif at which the pilgrims assume the Ihrâm or pilgrim garb: (p 67). The supposition is, perhaps, confirmed by the fact that the party sent by Mahomet to Nakhla shaved themselves *there*, to deceive the caravan they were about to attack into the belief that they were peaceable pilgrims. Wady Mohram, like the Nakhla of Mahomet's time, has still fruit trees and gardens. The Kâtib al Wâckidi's statement that there was a garden at Nakhla proves that it was on the Tâyif side of the mountain range; since all on the Meccan side is barren.

On the whole M. C. de Perceval's description of Nakhla as "midway between Mecca and Tâyif," (vol. iii. p. 34,) may be accepted as pretty accurate.

Cnf. Sprenger's "First notice of A. von Kremer's Wâckidi," Asiatic Society's Journal, 1856, p. 15, which I did not see till the above had been written.

* Sura xlvi. 29 &c. The scene is described in Sura lxxii. which opens thus;—

After spending some days at Nakhla, he again proceeded towards Mecca. But before entering the city, which he feared to do (now that the object of

Mahomet returns to Mecca.

SAY; it hath been revealed to me that a company of Genii listened, and they said,—"Verily we have heard a marvellous discourse (lit. *Coran*;)
It leadeth to the right direction; wherefore we believed therein, and we will not henceforth associate any with our Lord;
And as to Him,—may the Majesty of our Lord be exalted!—
He hath taken no Spouse, neither hath He any Offspring.
But verily the foolish people amongst us have spoken of God that which is unjust;
And we verily thought that no one amongst Men or Genii would have uttered a lie against God.
And truly there are people amongst Men, who have sought for refuge unto people among the Genii, but they only multiplied their folly.
And they thought, as ye think, that God would not raise any from the dead.
And we tried the Heavens, but found them filled with a powerful Guard, and with flaming Darts;
And we sat on some of the Stations to listen, but whoever listeneth now findeth an ambush of flaming Darts.
And truly we know not whether evil be intended for them that are on Earth, or whether their Lord intendeth for them right direction.
And there are amongst us righteous persons, and amongst us persons of another kind;—we are of various sorts:
And verily we thought that no one could frustrate God on earth, neither could we escape from him by flight;
Wherefore when we heard the direction, we believed therein."—(*and so on, the Genii speaking as true Moslems.*)

* * * *

And verily when the servant of God (Mahomet) stood up to call upon Him, they (the Genii) were near jostling him by their numbers, &c.

Notwithstanding the *crowds* of genii here alluded to, Hishémi (whose traditional authorities seem to have had a wonderfully intimate acquaintance with the habits and haunts of the Genii,) states that they were *seven* Genii belonging to Nisibin, who happened to pass that way, and were arrested by hearing Mahomet at his devotions reciting the Coran. Others say they were *nine* in number and came from Yemen, or from Nineveh. And it is added that they professed the Jewish religion! This of course arose from the reference made by them in the Coran to *Moses*.

his visit to Tâyif could not be kept secret) without a protector, he turned aside by a northward path to his ancient haunts in the vicinity of Mount Hirâ.* From thence he despatched two unsuccessful messages to solicit the guardianship of certain influential chiefs. At last he bethought him of Mutím (one of the five who had been instrumental in procuring the removal of the ban); and sent word beseeching that he would bring him in to the city under his protection. Mutím assented; and, having summoned his sons and adherents, bade them buckle on their armour and take their stand by the Kaaba. Mahomet and Zeid then entered Mecca; and, when they had reached the Kaaba, Mutím stood upright on his camel and called aloud, —"O ye Coreish! verily I have given the pledge of protection unto Mahomet; wherefore let not any one amongst you molest him." Then Mahomet went forward, kissed the corner stone, and returned to his house guarded by Mutím and his party. The generosity and faithfulness of Mutím† have

* Burkhardt mentions that on the Meccan side of the Mina valley (*i.e.* the Tayif road,) there is "a side valley leading toward Jabel Nour" or Hirâ. It may have been by this or a similar glen that Mahomet now turned aside to his cave and old haunts. *Burkhardt*, p. 279.

The modern traditions on the subject seem to place the site much nearer Mecca. See *Burton*, vol. iii. p. 353.

† The following are the lines, which form a good illustration of the value of contemporary poetry as auxiliary evidence of traditional facts:—

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been perpetuated by Hassân the poet of Medina and friend of the Prophet.

There is something lofty and heroic in this journey of Mahomet to Tâyif; a solitary man, despised and rejected by his own people, going boldly forth in the name of God,—like Jonah to Nineveh,—and summoning an idolatrous city to repentance and to the support of his mission. It sheds a strong light on the intensity of his own belief in the divine origin of his calling.

Mahomet sought for solace in the midst of family bereavement and public indignities, from a double matrimonial alliance. Sakrân with his wife Sawda, both of Coreishite blood (but of a stock remote from Mahomet), early became converts to Islam,

Mahomet marries Sawda, Feb. March, 620 A.D.;

عيني الا ابكي سيد الناس و اسفيحي * و ان انزفته
فاسكبي الدما * فلو كان مجد يخلد الدهر واحدا *
من الناس ابقى مجده لليوم مطعما * احرت رسول الله
منهم فاصبحوا * عبيدك ما لبي مهن و احرما *

Weep, Oh my eyes! for the chief of men; let tears gush forth; and when they run dry, then pour forth blood!

If Greatness had caused any to survive for ever amongst Mankind, then Greatness had preserved Mutim unto this day.

Thou gavest the pledge of protection to the prophet of God from the Coreish; and they became Thy servants so long as a pilgrim shall shout "Labeik!" or assume the pilgrim garb.

Mutim was a Chief descended from Abd Shams the brother of Hâshim (great grandfather of Mahomet;) and, along with Harb, commanded his tribe in one of the great battles in the Sacrilegious War, 586 A.D. *M. C. de Perceval*, vol. i. p. 309.

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and emigrated to Abyssinia. They had lately returned to Mecca, where Sakrân died. Mahomet now made suit to Sawda, and the marriage (so far as we know not one of mere interest and convenience, but of affection,) was celebrated within two months from the death of Khadija.*

and is betrothed to Ayesha.

About the same time he contracted a second marriage with Ayesha, the younger daughter of Abu Bakr,—a connection mainly designed to cement the attachment with his bosom-friend. The yet undeveloped charms of Ayesha could hardly have swayed the heart of Mahomet. Though her betrothed husband had reached fifty, she was but *six* or *seven* years of age.* Still there may have been something more than ordinarily interesting and precocious about the child, for the real marriage with her took place not more than three years afterwards.

His private means.

There is no information as to the terms on which Mahomet continued with the family of his deceased wife, Khadija; and whether he retained any part of the property that belonged to her. During the late

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* See chap. v. p. 162. Sawda, (a cousin of her husband Sakrân,) belonged to the distant branch of Amir ibn Lowey, which separated from the Hâshimite stem at the seventh remove from Mahomet. *Ibn Coteiba.*

Sprenger says she had a son by Sakrân; but if so, he did not survive, for Ibn Coteiba says that Sakrân left no issue.

Supposing Khadija to have died in December, 619 A.D., Mahomet's nuptials with Sawda may have taken place in February or the beginning of March, 620.

few troublous years, and especially under the ban, it is probable that her wealth had much diminished. Perhaps it was shared with the poorer brethren. It is certain that during his remaining stay at Mecca the Prophet had not much property at his disposal; and there are even indications (as we shall see below,) that he was straitened in his means. He appears still to have continued to live, at least occasionally, in the quarter, if not in the house, of Abu Talib*.

Light dawns through the darkness.

Repulsed from Tâyif, and utterly hopeless of further success at Mecca, the fortunes of Mahomet were enveloped in thick gloom, when hope suddenly dawned from an unexpected quarter.

Mahomet meets at the Pilgrimage a party from Medina, March, 620 A.D.

The season of pilgrimage was at hand; and, as his custom was, the Prophet plied the crowds of pilgrims with his solicitations wherever they afforded a likely audience. The ceremonies were nearly at an end; Mahomet had followed the votaries of the Kaaba on their procession to the hill of Arafat, and now back again to Minâ; whence, after sacrificing their victims, the multitude would disperse to their homes. Wandering through the busy scene that now presented itself in the narrow valley of Minâ, he was attracted by a little group of six or seven

* Thus at the Mirâj or heavenly journey, Mahomet is said to have slept during the night in Abu Tâlib's house. *Hishâmi* p. 129; *Kâtib ul Wâckidi*, p. 11.

persons, whom he recognized as strangers from Medina. "*Of what tribe are ye?*" said he, coming up and kindly accosting them. "Of the tribe of Khazraj," they replied. "*Ah! confederates of the Jews?*" "We are." "*Then, why should we not sit down for a little, and I will speak with you?*" The offer was accepted willingly, for the fame of Mahomet had been noised abroad in Medina, and the strangers were curious to see more of the man who had created in Mecca so great an excitement. He then expounded to them his doctrine, asserted the warrant of a divine mission, set forth the difficulties of his position at home, and enquired whether they would receive and protect him at Medina. The listeners were not slow to embrace the faith of Islam. "But as for protecting thee," said they, "we have hitherto been at variance among ourselves; and have fought great battles, as that of Boâth. If thou comest to us thus we shall be unable to rally around thee. Let us, we pray thee, return unto our people, if haply the Lord will create peace amongst us; and we will come back again unto thee. Let the season of pilgrimage in the following year be the appointed time." Thus they returned to their homes, and invited their people to the faith; and many believed, so that there remained hardly a family in Medina in which mention was not made of the Prophet.*

who believe and spread his cause in Medina.

* The words of tradition have been almost literally followed *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 41½; *Hishâmi*, p. 142; *Tabari*, p. 160.

This success at Medina, though unexpected, was not without perceptible causes. Numerous and powerful Jewish tribes were settled in the city or its immediate vicinity, and (as we have seen in a former chapter) divided their adherence between the two contending factions of the Aws and Khazraj, whose strife frequently stained with blood the city and its environs.* "When the Jews used thus to fight with the idolaters at Medina,"—relates Ibn Ishac with much simplicity,—"they would say;—*A Prophet is about to arise; his time draweth nigh. Him shall we follow; and then we shall slay you with the slaughter of Ad, and Irem.* So when Mahomet addressed the pilgrims of Medina at Miná, they spake one with another,—*Know surely that is the same Prophet, whom the Jews are wont to threaten us with. Wherefore let us make haste and be the first to join him.*"† There is truth, though exaggerated and distorted, in this statement. In the close and constant intercourse

Medina prepared by the influences of Judaism and Christianity.

Wackidi mentions *six* as composing the company, and in another place *eight*. It is impossible satisfactorily to reconcile discrepancy in the names. See *Sprenger*, p. 202. In one tradition it is said that the Prophet first met and spoke with *two* persons from Medina, not on the occasion of the *Yearly*, but of the "Lesser" or *Personal* pilgrimage (*Omrá*). It seems, however, more likely, from Mahomet's *being at Miná* when he met the Converts, that it was the *Annual* pilgrimage, Cnf. Introduction, chap. iii. p. ccv.

* See Introduction, chap. iii. p. ccxxxiv.

† *Hishám*, p. 143; *Tabari*, p. 161.

between the Jews and the Arabs of Medîna, the expectation of a Messiah, interwoven throughout the whole life of the former, could not but in some measure be communicated to the latter. Nor could the idolatrous inhabitants live in daily contact with a race professing the pure theism, and practising the stern morality of the Old Testament, without being influenced by the practical protest thus continually made against the errors of Paganism as contrasted with the spiritual worship of the one true God. Moreover, Medîna was only half the distance of Mecca from the christian tribes of southern Syria; the poet Hassân, and men of his stamp from Medîna, used to frequent the christian Court of the Ghassânide king; so that Christianity as well as Judaism wrought probably a more powerful effect upon the social condition of Medîna, than elsewhere in Arabia.

Internal strife had destroyed the fear of foreign influence.

The city had been long torn by internal war. The sanguinary conflict of Boâth, a few years before, had weakened and humiliated the Bani Khazraj, without materially strengthening the Bani Aws. Assassination had succeeded to open fighting. There was no one bold or commanding enough to seize the reins of Government; and the citizens, both Arabian and Jewish, lived in uncertainty and suspense. Little apprehension was felt from the advent of a stranger; even although he was likely to usurp, or gain permission to assume, the vacant

authority. Deadly jealousy at home had extinguished the jealousy of influence from abroad.

Such was the position of Medina. A tribe addicted to the superstition of Mecca, yet well acquainted with a purer faith, was in the best state of preparation to join itself to a reformer of the Kaaba worship. Idolatrous Arabs impressed with the indefinite anticipation of a Messiah, would readily recognize Mahomet as their Prophet. A city wearied with faction and strife, would cheerfully admit him to their hospitality as a refugee, if not welcome him to their counsels as a Chief. Medina prepared to accept Mahomet.

Looking now to their acquaintance with the new faith, it may be remarked that the politics of Mecca, and the history of the Prophet, could not be unknown at Medina. The Syrian caravans of the Coreish not unfrequently halted there. Occasional intermarriages took place between the inhabitants of the two cities. Mahomet himself was descended from a distinguished lady of Khazraj birth, espoused by Hâshim; and a favourable interest, among that tribe at least, was thus secured. Abu Cays, a famous poet of Medina, had some time before addressed the Coreish in verses intended to dissuade them from interference with Mahomet and his followers.* The Jews were already acquainted Its inhabitants familiar with his claims.

* *Hishámi*, p. 75; *M. C. de Perceval*, vol. i. p. 368. There is no apparent reason for doubting the authenticity of these verses. The following is one of them:—

ولى امر فاختار دينا فلا يكن ٭ عليكم رقيبا غير رب الثوقب ٭

with the Prophet as a zealous supporter of their Scriptures. Parties from Medina went up yearly to the solemnities of the Meccan Temple. A few had thus come under the direct influence of his preaching,* and all were familiar with the general nature of his claims. To this was now superadded the advocacy of actual converts.†

"One, who is his own master, hath chosen a (new) religion: and there is none other keeper over you than the Lord of the Heavens;" (that is, it belongs to God alone to call man to account for his religious opinions).

Abu Cays had a Coreishite wife, and had lived some time at Mecca. When Islâm began to spread at Medina, his adverse influence held back his own tribe (the Aws Monât or Aws Allah) from joining it. *Hishâmi*, p. 147; *M. C. de Perceval*, vol. iii. p. 5. He commanded the Awsites at the battle of Boâth. *M. C. de Perceval*, vol. ii. p. 680.

* The traditions regarding certain Jews coming to Mahomet when at Mecca, with questions to prove him, appear to be apocryphal. Yet there can be no doubt, from Mahomet's familiarity with Jewish history as shown in the Coran, that there was a close relation between Mahomet and some professors of the Jewish religion for a considerable time before the Hegira; and the Jews of Medina are the likeliest.

† There are indeed notices of actual conversion to Islâm among the citizens of Medina at an *earlier* period, but they are not well substantiated.

Thus, before the battle of Boâth, a deputation from the Bani Aws is said to have visited Mecca, to seek for auxiliaries from among the Coreish in the coming struggle. "And they listened to Mahomet; and *Ayâs*, a youth of their number, declared that this was far better than the errand they had come upon; but Abul Haysar their Chief cast dust upon him, saying, they had another business than to hear these things." Ayâs, who was killed shortly after in the intestine struggles at Medina, is said to have died a true Mussulman. *Hishâmi*, p. 142; *Tabari*, p. 159.

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This was to Mahomet a year of anxiety and expectation. Would the handful of Medina converts remain steady to his cause? Would they be able to extend that cause among their fellow-citizens? If they should prove unfaithful, or fail of success, what resource would then remain? He might be forced to emigrate to Syria or to Abyssinia, and seek refuge with the Ethiopian Najâshy, or amongst the Christian tribes of the northern desert. The year 620 A.D. one of anxiety and suspense.

Similarly, *Suwaid*, son of Sâmit, an Awsite poet, came and repeated to Mahomet the Persian tale of Loeman. Mahomet, saying that he had something better than that, recited the Coran to him. The poet was delighted with it; "he was not far from Islâm, and some said that he died a Moslem." *Hishâm*, p. 141; *Tabari*, p. 158.

Anticipations of Islâm are supplied by tradition, for Medina as well as for Mecca. Thus:—"The first that believed were Asâd ibn Zorâra and Dzakwân, who set out for Mecca to contend in rivalry with Otba son of Rabia. But, on their arrival, Otba said to them:—*That praising fellow who fancieth himself to be the Prophet of God, hath occupied us to the exclusion of every other business.* Now Asâd and Abul Haytham used to converse at Medina with each other, about the unity of God. When Dzakwân, therefore, heard this saying of Otba, he exclaimed,—*Listen, oh Asâd! this must be thy religion.* So they went straight to Mahomet, who expounded to them Islâm, and they both believed and returned to Medina. And Asâd related to Abul Haytham (a resident of Medina) all that had passed, and he said "*I too, am a believer, with thee.*" *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 41½. Sprenger adopts this version as the true one, since it corresponds with his theory of the existence of Islam before Mahomet.

It is admitted on all hands that Asâd and Abul Haytham were forward, and early, in the movement at Medina.

The first pledge of Acaba, by the men of Medina, April, 21 A.D.

The days of pilgrimage at last again came round, and Mahomet sought the appointed spot in a sheltered glen near Minâ. His apprehensions were at once dispelled: for there he found a band of twelve faithful disciples ready to acknowledge him as their prophet. Ten were of the Khazraj, and two of the Aws, tribe.* They plighted their faith to Mahomet thus;—"*We will not worship any but the One God; we will not steal, neither will we commit adultery, or kill our children; we will not slander in anywise; and we will not disobey the Prophet,*† *in anything that is right.*" This was afterwards called the Pledge of Women,‡ because, as not embracing any stipulation to *defend* the Prophet, it was the only oath ever required from females. When all had taken this engagement, Mahomet replied;—*If ye fulfil the pledge, Paradise shall be your reward. He that shall fail in any part thereof, to God belongeth his concern, either to punish or forgive.* This memorable proceeding is known in the annals of Islâm as THE FIRST PLEDGE OF ACABA,§ for that was the name of the little eminence or defile whither they retired from observation.

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* We approach now to certain ground. There is no doubt or discrepancy whatever regarding the names of these twelve persons. *Kitâb al Wâckidi*, p. 42; *Hishâmi*, p. 143.

† Literally "him."

‡ بيعة النساء

§ بيعة العقبة الاولى

These twelve men were now committed to the cause of Mahomet. They returned to Medina the missionaries of Islâm, again to report their success at the following pilgrimage. So prepared was the ground, so zealous the propagation, that the new faith spread rapidly from house to house and from tribe to tribe. The Jews looked on in amazement at the people, whom they had in vain endeavoured for generations to convince of the errors of Polytheism and to dissuade from the abominations of Idolatry, suddenly and of their own accord casting away their idols, and professing belief in the One true God. The secret lay in the adaptation of the instrument. Judaism, foreign in its growth, touched few Arab sympathies; Islâm, grafted upon the faith, the superstition, the customs, the nationality of the Peninsula, gained ready access to every heart.

Increasing success of Islam at Medina during 621 A.D.

The leaders in the movement soon found themselves unable to keep pace with its rapid progress. So they wrote to Mahomet for a teacher, well versed in the Coran, who might initiate the enquirers in the rudiments of the new Faith. The youthful and devoted Musáb, who had lately returned from exile in Abyssinia, was deputed for that purpose.* He

Musáb deputed thither to instruct the converts.

* *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 42; *Hishâmi*, p. 144; *Tabari*, p. 169. According to Hishâmi, Mahomet sent Musáb *back with the twelve*, after the first pledge of Acaba. The statement of the Kâtib al Wâckidi is clear, as in the text, that he was sent upon a written requisition from Medina.

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lodged at Medîna with Asád ibn Zorâra, who used to gather the converts together to him for prayer and the reading of the Coran. The combined devotions of the Aws and Khazraj tribes were first conducted by Musáb; for even in such a matter they were impatient of a common leader from amongst themselves.* Thus speedily, without let or hindrance, did Islâm take firm root at Medîna, and attain to a full and mature growth.†

Musab will be remembered as the youth, whose pathetic interview with his mother has been described in chap. iv. p. 119.

* *Hishámi, ibid.* The call to Mahomet for a teacher is stated by the Kâtib al Wâckidi to have been made in common both by the Aws and Khazraj. Hishâmi mentions a *Friday* service, the first at Medîna, held at the instance of Asád, and attended by forty men; but it looks anticipative and apocryphal.

† The following narrative, though probably fabricated in many of its details, will illustrate at any rate the manner in which Islâm was propagated at Medîna.

"Asád and Musáb on a certain day went to the quarters of the Awsites, and entering one of their gardens, sat down by a well, when a company of believers gathered around them. Now Sád ibn Muádz and Oseid ibn Khuzeir were chief men of the *Abdal Ashal* (a branch of the Awsites); and they were both idolaters following the old religion. So when they heard of the gathering at the well, Sád, who was unwilling himself to interfere (being related to Asád,) bade his comrade go and disperse them. Oseid seized his weapons, and hurrying to the spot, began thus to abuse them:—*What brings you two men here amongst us, to mislead our youths and silly folk? Begone, if ye have any care for your lives.* Musáb disarmed his wrath by courteously inviting him to sit down and listen to the doctrine. So he stuck his spear into the ground and seated himself; and as he listened, he was charmed with the new faith, and purified himself and embraced Islâm. And he said

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The midnight journey to Jerusalem, and the Heavens.

The hopes of Mahomet were now fixed upon Medina. Visions of his journey northwards flitted before his imagination. The musings of the day re-appeared in midnight slumbers. He dreamed that he was swiftly carried by Gabriel on a winged steed past Medina to the temple at Jerusalem, where he was welcomed by the former Prophets, all assembled for his reception in solemn conclave. His excited spirit conjured up a still more transcendant scene. From Jerusalem he seemed to mount upwards, and ascend from one Heaven to another; he found himself at last in the awful presence of his Maker, who dismissed him with the behest that his people were to pray five times

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"there is another beside me, even Sád ibn Moádz, whom I will send to you: if you can gain him over, there will not be one in his tribe left unconverted." So he departed and sent Sád, and Musáb persuaded him in like manner. And Sád returned to his tribe and swore that he would not speak to man or woman that did not acknowledge Mahomet:—and so great was his influence, that *by the evening every one of the tribe was converted.*"

"Such were the exertions of Asád and Musáb that there remained not a house among the Arabs of Medina in which there were not believing men and women, excepting the branches of the *Aus Allah* who, owing to the influence of Abu Cays the poet, continued unbelievers, till after the siege of Medina." *Hishámi*, p. 146; *Tabari*, p. 165.

There is a story of Amr ibn al Jumoh who, like the other chiefs of Medina, had an image in his house. This image the young converts used to cast every night into a filthy well, and the old man as regularly cleansed it; till, one day, they tied it to a dead dog and cast it into a well. Then the old man abandoned his image and believed. *Hishámi*, p. 153.

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in the day. As he awoke in the morning in the house of Abu Tâlib, where he had passed the night, the vision was vividly before his eyes; and he exclaimed to Omm Hâni, the daughter of Abu Tâlib, that during the night he had prayed in the Temple of Jerusalem. While he was going forth to tell the vision to others, she seized him by the mantle, and conjured him not thus to expose himself to the mockery and revilings of the unbelievers. But he persisted. As the story spread abroad, the idolators scoffed, the believers were staggered, and some are said even to have gone back.* Abu Bakr supported the Prophet, and declared his implicit belief in the Vision.† In the end the credit of Islâm among its adherents suffered no material injury.

The Vision subsequently embellished by fancy.

The tale is one in which tradition revels with congenial ecstacy. The rein has been given loose to a pious imagination. Both the journey and the ascent to Heaven, are decked out in the most extra-

* This, though stated both by the Kâtib al Wâckidi and Hishâmi, appears improbable; and no names are specified. The words in the former are,—"upon this many went back who had prayed and joined Islâm," p. 41; *Hishâmi*, p. 127. But the whole story is one of those marvellous subjects upon which tradition whenever it touches runs wild, and anything is thrown in which adds to the effect.

† He said *Sadacta*,—"thou hast spoken the truth;" and hence according to some traditions, was called *Al Sadick*. He appears, however, to have had this name, as Mahomet that of *Al Amin*, from his probity and truthfulness.

vagant colouring of Romance, and in all the gorgeous drapery that Fancy could conceive.* But

* What is here stated is all that historical criticism warrants us in attributing to Mahomet himself. It is *possible* that in later life he may have gratified the morbid curiosity of his followers by adding imaginary details to the Vision. But even this supposition is limited by the known reserve and taciturnity of the Prophet.

It is said that incredulous idolaters wished to throw him into confusion by asking for a *description* of the Temple he had thus been to see: and he was in great straits, until Gabriel placed before him a *model* of the Temple, and he was able then satisfactorily to answer all their questioning. But this is only of a piece with the other childish stories told of the occasion. Thus Mahomet replied to his questioners that, on his way to Jerusalem, he had passed over a caravan from Syria; that the whizzing noise of Borâc, the flying steed on which he travelled, had frightened away one of the camels; and that the people of the caravan could not find it till he pointed it out to them. So also, on his way back, he passed another caravan, in the encampment of which was a covered vessel filled with water; as he passed, he drank up the water and restored the cover. And both caravans on arriving at Mecca confirmed this evidence of the reality of the heavenly journey! *Hishâmi*, p. 130.

Sprenger considers Mahomet here to have committed "an unblushing forgery: he sold a description of the Temple of Jerusalem, which he may have obtained from books or oral information, to the best advantage." I would rather look upon the tradition regarding the model and the questions answered from it, in the same light as the two last foolish stories,—equally worthless and fabricated. Sprenger holds by the respectability of the authorities; there is no event of his life, he says, "on which we have more numerous and genuine traditions than on his nightly journey." But on a supernatural and imaginary subject, *numerous* traditions forming around some early common type, were to be expected, and their number can add little if anything to the historical value of their contents. See Introduction, chap. i. p. lxvii.

The earliest authorities point only to a *vision*, not to a real bodily journey. Sprenger seems to be in error when he says that

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Only notice of it in the Coran.

The only mention in the Coran of this notable vision, is contained in the seventeenth Sura, which opens thus;—

Praise be to Him who carried His servant by night from the Sacred Temple, to the farther Temple* the environs of which we have blessed, that we might show him some of our signs. Verily He it is that heareth and seeth.†

"*all historical records are for the latter opinion*" (*i.e.* a bodily journey:) "*the former*" (that it was a mere Vision) "*is upheld by some Sceptics only*" (p. 136). I. In opposition to this, we have the story of Omm Hâni, as in the text, given both by the Kâtib al Wâckidi (p. 41) and Hishâmi (p. 129). II. Cutâda and Ayesha are quoted as holding that "the Prophet's body did not disappear, but that God carried him away by night *in the spirit*." *Hishâmi, ibid.* III. Hasan applies the verse in the Coran (Sura xvii. v. 61) regarding "*the Vision*" correctly to this heavenly journey, and Muâvia farther illustrates it by the *Vision* in which Abraham appeared to himself to be sacrificing his son. Others make the *Vision*, in the verse referred to, to mean the *model* of the Temple held by Gabriel before Mahomet! *Kâtib el Wâckidi*, p. 41. IV. Hishâmi draws the conclusion that, whichever of the two views be accepted, "the vision at any rate was true and faithful." Tradition cannot therefore be said to be adverse to the theory that it was a simple Vision.

After his visit to Heaven, Mahomet is said to have consoled his faithful Zeid by telling him how beautiful and happy he saw the little daughter whom he had lately lost, in Paradise. *Hishâmi*, p. 153.

Most authors agree that the *Ascent to Heaven* (MIRÂJ) occurred the same night as the journey to Jerusalem (ISRÂ): but the Kâtib al Wâckidi, who is more credulous and less critical than Ibn Ishâc and Hishâmi in this instance, makes the former to have happened on the 17th Ramadhân, a year and a half before Mahomet's flight to Medina; and the latter on the 17th Rabi I, six months later; p. 40.

* من المسجد الحرام الى المسجد الاقصى

† A farther allusion to the Journey is supposed to be contained in v. 61 of the same Sura. "And (call to mind) when we said

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Mahomet watches the struggle between Persia and the Roman empire.

The political events in the North had long engaged the attention of Mahomet. His interest was now quickened by the prospect of approaching himself so much nearer to the scene of action. Almost from the period at which he had assumed the prophetical office, the victorious arms of Chosroes had been turned against the Grecian frontier. The desert tract, with its Arab christian tribes who used to oscillate between one dominion and the other according to the fortune of war, first fell into the hands of Persia. The enemy then ravaged the whole of Syria; Jerusalem was sacked; Egypt and Asia Minor overrun; an army advanced upon the Thracian Bosphorus, "and a Persian camp was maintained above ten years in the presence of Constantinople."* In 621 A.D. when the fortunes of the Grecian empire were at the lowest ebb, Heraclius was roused from inaction, and after several years of

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unto Thee, *Verily thy Lord hedgeth in mankind*; and we made not the Vision which we showed unto Thee other than a trial unto the people,—and likewise the accursed Tree in the Coran. And we (seek to) strike terror into them, but it only increaseth in them enormous wickedness."

This is quoted by traditionists as bearing out (but seemingly on insufficient grounds,) the falling away of those believers who were scandalized by the Vision. A pious gloss in Hishâmi goes still farther, for it says that had the journey been a mere Vision, nobody would have been scandalized; but scandal having been raised, and believers having gone back, therefore the journey was a real and a corporeal one! *Hishâmi*, p. 128.

* *Gibbon's Decline and Fall*, chap. xlvi.

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arduous conflict rolled back the invasion, and totally discomfited the Persians.

His sympathies are with Heraclius, and he foretels the victory of the Greeks.

In this struggle, the sympathies and hopes of Mahomet were all enlisted on the side of the Cæsar. Christianity was a Divine faith that might coalesce with Islâm; but the fire-worship and superstitions of Persia were utterly repugnant to its principles. It was while the career of Persian conquest was yet unchecked, that Mahomet, in the opening of the thirtieth Sura, uttered the following augury of the eventual issue of the contest;—

"The GREEKS have been conquered,
In the neighbouring coast; but, after their defeat, they shall again be victorious,
In a few years. To GOD belongeth the matter from before, and after; and, in that day, the Believers shall rejoice
In the aid of GOD. He aideth whom he chooseth; and He is the GLORIOUS, the MERCIFUL.
It is the Promise of GOD. GOD changeth not His promise; but the greater part of Mankind know it not."*

A lull at Mecca.

There was now a lull at Mecca. Mahomet despaired, by the simple influence of preaching and persuasion, of effecting farther progress there. His

* The commentators add a very convenient story in illustration. Abu Bakr, on the passage being revealed, laid a wager of ten camels, with Obba Ibn Khalf, that the Persians would be beaten within *three* years. Mahomet desired him to extend the period to *nine* years and to raise the stake. This Abu Bakr did, and in due time won one hundred camels from Obba's heirs.

But the story is apocryphal. It is neither in the Kâtib al Wâckidi nor in Hishâmi; and bears a most suspicious stamp of being a late fabrication in illustration of the passage in the Coran.

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eye was fixed upon Medina, and he waited in quietness and confidence, until succour should come from thence. At home, meanwhile, offensive measures were abandoned. Islâm was no longer aggressive. And the Coreish, congratulating themselves that their enemy had tried his worst, and now was harmless, relaxed their vigilance and opposition. For his new course of action, Mahomet, as usual, had divine authority:—

> Follow that which hath been revealed unto thee from thy Lord;—there is no God but He;—and retire from the Idolaters.
>
> If God had so desired, they had not followed Idolatry: and WE have not made thee a Keeper over them, neither art thou unto them a Guardian.
>
> *And revile not those whom they invoke besides God, lest they revile God in enmity from lack of knowledge.*
>
> Thus have WE rendered attractive unto every People their own doings; then unto the Lord
>
> Shall be their return, and He shall declare unto them that which they have wrought.*

But with this cessation of aggressive measures, there was no wavering of principle, nor any distrust of eventual success. A calm and lofty front was maintained of superiority, if not of defiance. Eventual success, in spite of present discouragement,

But a continued assurance of success in the mind of Mahomet.

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* Sura vi. 106-108. The opposite party begin to be termed "the confederates."—الأحزاب Sura xi. v. 18. So, in the same Sura, *v.* 25, "the likeness of *the two parties*—الفريقين —is as the Blind and Deaf, compared with him that hath both Sight and Hearing:—What! are these equal in resemblance? Ah! do ye not comprehend?"

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was clear and assured. The Lord had given to all his Apostles of old the victory, and he would give the same to Mahomet;—

> We shall hurl THE TRUTH against that which is False, and it shall shiver it, and lo, that which is False shall vanish; —Wo unto you for that which ye imagine!
>
> * * * *
>
> Vengeance shall fall suddenly upon them. It shall confound them. They shall not be able to oppose the same, neither shall they be respited.
>
> Verily, Apostles before thee have been mocked; but they that laughed them to scorn were encompassed by the Vengeance which they mocked at.
>
> * * * *
>
> The unbelieving (Nations) said unto their Apostles;—*We will surely expel you from our Land, or ye shall return to our Religion.* Then their Lord spake by revelation unto them, saying;—*Verily* WE *shall destroy the Unjust!*
>
> *And* WE *shall cause you to inherit the Land after them;—this shall be for him that feareth My appearing, and feareth My threatening.*
>
> So they asked assistance of the Lord, and every Tyrant and rebellious one was destroyed.
>
> * * * *
>
> Verily, they have devised evil devices; but their devices are in the hand of God, even if their devices could cause the Mountains to pass away.
>
> Wherefore think not thou that God will work at variance with His promise which he made unto his Apostles. Verily the Lord is Mighty, and a God of Vengeance.*

Judgments threatened against Mecca;

A dearth fell upon Mecca;—it was a punishment from God because the citizens had rejected his

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* Sura xxi. *vv.* 18, 41, 42; and xiv. vv. 14, 46, 47. *Cnf.* also Sura xliii. *vv.* 77-79. The *whole tenour* of the Coran at this period is indeed that of quiet, but confident, defiance.

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Messenger. Relief was vouchsafed; it was intended to try whether the goodness of God would not lead to repentance. If they still hardened their hearts, a more fearful fate was denounced.*

which Mahomet might, or might not, behold.

That ten-fold vengeance would overtake the people if they continued to refuse the truth, Mahomet surely believed. *He* might not live to see it; but the decree of God was unchangeable:—

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* There is no satisfactory statement regarding this visitation in any reliable tradition. The *commentators* have, of course, invented details to illustrate the notices of it which occur in the Coran. Yet those notices are so clear and distinct as to allow no doubt that *some* affliction of the kind did occur, which was attributed by Mahomet to the Divine vengeance:—

And if We have mercy upon them and withdraw the affliction that befel them, they plunge into their Wickedness, wildly wandering.

And verily We visited them with Affliction, and they humbled not themselves before their Lord, nor made Supplication:—

Until, when We open unto them a Door of severe Punishment, lo! they are in despair thereat. *Sura* xxiii. vv. 77-79.

The *latter* punishment referred to in this passage the commentators will have to be the battle of Badr; but that, of course, is an anachronism. Again:—

And when We made the People to taste Mercy, after the affliction that befel them, lo! they devise deceit against our Signs. Say, God is more swift than ye in deceit; Verily Our Messengers write down that which ye devise.

It is He that causeth you to travel by Land and by Water, so that when ye are in Ships, and sail in them with a pleasant breeze, they rejoice thereat.

A fierce Storm overtaketh them, and the Waves come upon them from every quarter, and they think that verily they are closed in thereby; then they call upon God, rendering unto Him pure Service, and saying, *If Thou savest us from this, we shall verily be amongst the Grateful.*

But when He hath saved them, behold! they work evil in the Earth unrighteously. Oh ye People, verily your evil working is against your own Souls, &c. *Sura* x. vv. 22-24; *Cnf. Sura* vii. v. 95.

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What! Canst *thou* make the Deaf to hear, or guide the Blind, or him that is wandering widely?

Wherefore, whether We take thee away, verily We will pour our vengeance upon them;

Or, whether We cause thee to see that which We have threatened them with, verily We are all powerful over them.

Therefore hold fast that which hath been revealed unto thee, for thou art in the straight path.*

Sublime spectacle presented by Mahomet at this juncture.

Mahomet, thus holding his people at bay; waiting in the still expectation of victory; to outward appearance defenceless, and with his little band as it were in the lion's mouth; yet, trusting in His almighty power whose Messenger he believed himself to be, resolute and unmoved;—presents a spectacle of sublimity paralleled only, in the Sacred Records, by such scenes as that of the Prophet of Israel when he complained to his Master, "I, even I only, am left." Nay, the spectacle is in one point of view *more* marvellous; because the Prophets of old were upheld by a divine inspiration, accompanied (as we may conclude) by an unwavering consciousness in its reality, and strengthened by the palpable demonstrations of miraculous power; while with the Arabian Prophet, the memory at least of former doubt, and the confessed inability to work

* Sura xliii. *vv.* 38-41. There are various other passages in the Suras of this period to the same effect. Thus:—"Wherefore persevere patiently, for the promise of God is true, whether We cause thee to see some part of that wherewith We have threatened them, or cause thee (first) to die; and unto Us shall they return," &c. Sura xl. v. 78. Compare also Suras xxiii. v. 95; x. v. 46; xxix. v. 53; xxxvii. v. 178; xiii. v. 42.

any miracle, must at times have caused a gleam of uncertainty to shoot across the soul. It is this which throws out into if possible still bolder prominence the amazing self-possession, and enduring enthusiasm, which sustained his course. "Say unto the Unbelievers,"—such was the divine message he professed to receive,—"Say, *Work ye in your place. Wait ye in expectation.* WE, *too, in expectancy, will wait.*"*

His bearing towards his own followers, no less than towards his opponents, exhibits the full assurance of being the Vicegerent of God. Obedience to "*God and his Apostle*," is now the watchword of Islâm;— Authority assumed in reference to his own followers.

> Whosoever disobeyeth GOD AND HIS PROPHET, verily to him shall be the Fire of Hell; they shall be therein alway, —for ever!†

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* Sura xl. v. 121, *et passim.*

† Sura lxxii. v. 23. The sequel of this passage is singular. God sends a guard to attend his prophet in order that He may see that the message is duly delivered,—as if God had reason to doubt the fidelity of his prophet in this respect:—

> When they see that with which they were threatened, then they shall know which side was the weakest in succour, and the fewest in number.
> SAY I know not whether that which ye are threatened with be near, or whether my Lord shall make for it a limit of time.
> He knoweth the secret thing, and he unveileth not His Secret unto any;
> Excepting unto such of His Apostles as pleaseth him, and He maketh a Guard to go before and behind him (*i.e.* His Apostle);
> That He may know that they verily deliver the messages of their Lord,
> He encompasseth whatever is beside them,
> And counteth everything by number.

In farther illustration of the text see Sura lxiv. v. 9:—

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Fearful asseverations that he is not the fabricator of a Revelation.

The confidence in his inspiration is sometimes expressed with imprecations, which one cannot read without a shudder;—

(I swear) by that which ye see,
And by that which ye do not see,
That this is verily the speech of an honourable Apostle!
It is not the speech of a Poet; little is it ye believe!
And it is not the speech of a Soothsayer; little is it ye reflect!
It is a Revelation from the Lord of Creation.
And if he (Mahomet) had fabricated concerning us any sayings,
Verily WE had caught him by the right hand,
Then had WE cut asunder the artery of his neck,
Nor would there have been amongst you any to hinder therefrom.*
But verily it is an Admonition to the Pious,
And truly WE know that there are amongst you those who belie the same;
But it shall cause Sighing unto the Unbelievers.
And it is the TRUTH;—the CERTAIN!
Therefore praise the name of thy Lord,—the GLORIOUS!†

Means of support deficient.

It would seem as if the difficulties of the prophet were at this period increased by straitened means. Though supported probably by help from his rela-

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Wherefore believe in GOD AND HIS APOSTLE, and the Light which WE have sent down, &c.

And *obey God and obey the Apostle*; but if ye turn back, verily our Apostle hath only to deliver his message. v. 13.

Thenceforward the expression becomes common.

* The commentators observe that the allusion is to the Oriental mode of execution. The executioner seizes the condemned culprit by the right hand, while with a sharp sword or axe he aims a blow at the back of the neck, and the head is detached at the first stroke. This mode of execution is still, or was till lately, practised in Mahometan States in India.

† Sura lxix. vv. 38-52.

tives and followers, there was yet ground for care and anxiety. The Divine promise re-assures him in such terms as these;—

> And stretch not forth thine eyes to the Provision WE have made for divers among them,—the show of this present life, —that WE may prove them thereby; and the Provision of the Lord is better and more lasting.
>
> And command thy Family to observe Prayer, and to persevere therein: WE ask thee not (to labour) for a Provision; WE shall provide for thee, and a successful issue shall be to Piety.*

Pilgrimage, March, 622, A.D. Preparations made secretly for the *Second Pledge of Acaba.*

Thus another year passed away in comparative tranquillity, and the month of Pilgrimage, when the Medina converts were again to rally around the prophet, came round. Written accounts, as well as messages, of the amazing success of Islâm had no doubt reached Mahomet;† yet he was hardly prepared for the large and enthusiastic band ready to crowd to his standard, and swear allegiance to him as their prophet and their master. But it was necessary to proceed with caution. The Coreish, if aware of this extensive and hostile confederacy,—hostile because pledged to support (though only as yet defensively) a faction in their community,—would have good ground for umbrage; the sword

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* Sura xx. vv. 130, 131.

† The converts at Medina had, as we have seen, *written* to Mahomet early in the year for a teacher. Both they and the teacher (Musáb,) would no doubt communicate to the Prophet, by letter as well as by verbal message, the wonderful success they had met with.

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might prematurely be unsheathed, and the cause of Islâm seriously endangered. The movements were, therefore, conducted with the utmost secrecy. Even the other pilgrims from Medîna, in whose company the converts travelled, were unaware of their object.*

Musáb joins the pilgrimage from Medina, and reports success to Mahomet.

Musáb, the teacher, who also joined the pilgrimage to Mecca, immediately on his arrival repaired to Mahomet, and related all that had happened during his absence at Medîna. The prophet rejoiced greatly when he heard of the numbers of the converts, and their eagerness in the service of Islâm.†

The meeting to be by night, at Acaba, at the close of the Pilgrimage.

To elude the scrutiny of the Meccans, the meeting between Mahomet and his Medîna followers was to be by night; and that the strangers might, in case suspicions were aroused, be for as short a time as possible within reach of their enemies, it was deferred to the very close of the pilgrimage when, the ceremonies and sacrifices being finished, the multitude would on the following day disperse to their homes.‡

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* *Hishâmi*, p. 148; *Tabari*, p. 169. Sprenger gives the total number of pilgrims from Medîna that year (both heathen and Mussulman) at upwards of 570; of whom seventy only were of the Aws tribe, and the remainder Khazrajites.

† *Kâtib al Wâekidi*, p. 201½. It was immediately after this that Musáb went to visit his mother. Chap. iv. p. 120.

‡ This appears to be the likeliest date, as the events following seem to prove that the next day the multitudes broke up, and the Medîna party proceeded homewards. The date would thus be the night succeeding the 11th Dzul Hijj, or that intervening between the 31st March and the 1st April, A.D. 622.

The expression in all our three authorities is من اوساط ايام

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The spot was to be the secluded glen, where the men of Medîna had before met Mahomet, close by the road as the traveller quits the valley of Minâ, and beneath the well-known eminence Acaba.* They were to move cautiously thither, when all had retired to rest;—"waking not the sleeper, nor tarrying for the absent."†

التشريق —"in the days of the Tashrîck," *i.e.* the three days intervening between the 10th and the 13th of Dzul Hijj. A tradition in Hishâmi adds that it was after the pilgrimage was ended:—فلما فرغنا من الحج p. 147. The Secretary of Wâckidi relates as follows:—ثم وعدهم منا وسط ايام التشريق ليلة النفر الول اذا هدائت الرجل "Then Mahomet arranged that they should meet him at Minâ, in the days of the Tashrîck, on the (night preceding) the first day of departure, when men had fallen asleep," p. 42½. The "first day of departure," *al Nafr*, is the 12th of Dzul Hijj. See *Tâj ul Lughât*, *Lucknow*, *in loco*. Some pilgrims stay at Mina till the 13th, which may perhaps account for the the expression "*first* day of departure." For the ceremonies here alluded to, see *Burton*, vol. iii. p. 241, and chap. xxxii. At p. 286 he refers to an intermediate *Nafr*, or return to Mecca on the 10th, on which occasion the pilgrim repairs to the Kaaba, but again revisits Minâ before his final departure. It is *possible* that this ceremony may be alluded to in the expression above quoted. See also above, Introduction, chap. iii. p. cevi.

* It is called "the right hand glen (*Sheb*,) as you descend from Minâ, below the height (Acaba,) where the mosque now stands." *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 42½.
فى الشعب الايمن اذا تحدروا من منا باسفل العقبه حيث المسجد اليوم

As the valley of Minâ descends towards Mecca, the "right hand" means probably that of a person proceeding to Mecca, and therefore points to the *north* side of the valley. See *Burkhardt*, pp. 59-277.

† *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, *ibid.*

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Mahomet proceeds at midnight to the spot, attended by Abbâs;

One or two hours before midnight, Mahomet repaired to the rendezvous, the first of the party.* He was attended only by his uncle Abbâs. To secure the greater secrecy, the assembly was perhaps kept private even from the Moslems of Mecca.† Abbâs was the wealthiest of the sons of Abd al Muttalib, but he was weak in character, and ordinarily sailed with the tide. He was not a convert; but close relationship, and the long community of interest excited by the three years' confinement in the *Sheb* of Abu Tâlib, rendered him sufficiently trustworthy on the present occasion.‡

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* *Kitâb al Wâckidi*, p. 42½.

† Or if they were in the secret, they were instructed not to be present, the less to excite suspicion. We may suppose that Mahomet's more intimate friends, Abu Bakr, Zeid, Omar, Hamza, &c. were aware of his intentions. It is remarkable that not even Musâb appears to have come to the rendezvous with his Medîna converts; for it is distinctly said by Wâckidi that "there was no one with Mahomet besides Abbâs."

Hishâmi makes the Medîna converts to have assembled first, and to have waited for Mahomet, who arrived later, (p. 148). *Tabari*, p. 170.

‡ For more particulars of Abbâs, see chapter I, p. 31. Some hold Abbâs to have been a *secret* believer long before the conquest of Mecca: but this is evidently an Abbâsside fiction. His faith was that of *expediency*. He held with the Meccans until Mahomet became too powerful to admit of doubt as to his eventual success; and then he colluded with him, shortly before the attack on Mecca.

The presence of Abbâs at this meeting is supported by traditions in each of our early authorities. Tabari has one to the effect that the Medîna converts recognized him, because he used frequently to pass through their city on his mercantile expeditions to Syria.

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and is joined by the Medîna converts.

Mahomet had not long to wait. Soon the Medîna converts, singly, and by twos and threes, were descried through the moonlight moving stealthily along the stony valley and among the barren rocks towards the spot.* They amounted to seventy-three men and two women. All the early converts who had before met the prophet on the two preceding pilgrimages were there.† When they were seated, Abbâs, in a low voice, broke the silence by a speech something to the following effect:—

Speech of Abbâs;

"Ye company of the KHAZRAJ! ‡ This my kinsman dwelleth amongst us in honour and safety. His clan will defend him,—both those that are converts, and those who still adhere to their ancestral faith. But he preferreth to seek protection from *you*.§ Wherefore, consider well the matter; and

* As the Meccan month commenced with the new moon, it would, on the 12th of Dzul Hijj, be within two or three days of full moon.

† There were only eleven of the Aws tribe; the remaining sixty-two being Khazrajites. The two women were Nuseiba, daughter of Kâb (several traditions from whom regarding the assembly have been preserved); and Asmâ daughter of Amr, whose husband (Hishâmi adds,) two sons, and *sister*, were present with her. This would seem to imply that there were *three* women there. *Hishâmi*, p. 157.

‡ Hishâmi states that the people of Medîna, both of the Aws and Khazraj tribes, used to be addressed collectively by the Arabs as Khazrajites.

§ The speech of Abbâs is given in all three of our authorities, but with great variation. Indeed it could not be expected that its purport should have been exactly preserved. It seems certain,

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count the cost. If ye be resolved, and able, to defend him,—well. But if ye doubt your ability, at once abandon the design."

and of Abu Barâ.

Then spoke Abu Barâ, an aged Chief:—"We have listened to thy words. Our resolution is unshaken. Our lives are at his service. It is now for *him* to speak."

The address of Mahomet.

Mahomet began, as was his wont, by reciting appropriate passages from the Coran; then he invited all present to the service of God, dwelt upon the claims and blessings of Islâm, and concluded by saying that he would be content if the strangers pledged themselves to defend him as they did their own wives and children.* He had no sooner

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however, that it was he who opened the proceedings. The sentiments are those which would naturally be attributed to him; and are appropriate enough, excepting that, both here and in the other addresses, there is too distinct an anticipation of the future armed struggle with Arabia and the whole world. Thus Abbâs speaks of the people of Medîna incurring by their league with Mahomet the enmity of "all the Arabs, who would discharge themselves against Medîna, like arrows from one bow." And Abbâs ibn Obâda, one of the Medîna converts, tells his brethren that they have "now pledged themselves *to fight all mankind*," (lit. *the red and the white amongst men*). The last tradition is not in the Kâtib al Wâckidi, and possesses little weight.

* Hishâmi says that Abul Haytham interrupted Barâ in his address, saying that by their present act they were cutting their bonds with their allies the Jews, and asking Mahomet whether, if God gave him the victory, he would not desert them and return to Mecca. Whereupon Mahomet smiled graciously, and said:—*Nay! your blood is mine; your destruction would be that of my very self. I am yours, ye are mine. I shall fight with whom ye fight,*

ended than, from every quarter, there arose a confused and tumultuous noise; it was the eager voices of the Seventy* testifying their readiness to take the pledge, and protesting that they would receive the prophet even if it cost the loss of property, and the slaughter of their chiefs. Then Abbâs, who stood by holding his nephew's hand, called aloud; —"Hush!† There are spies about. Let your men of years stand forth, and let them speak on your behalf. Of a verity, we are fearful for your safety if our people should discover us. Then when ye have plighted your faith depart to your encampments." So their chief men stood forth. Then said Barâ;—"Stretch out thy hand, Oh Mahomet!" And he stretched it out; and Barâ clapped his hand thereon, as the manner was in taking an oath of fealty.‡ Then the seventy came forward one by

and make peace with whom ye make peace. But the sentiment is altogether an after-thought. There was not at that time the slightest suspicion that Mahomet would break with the Jews. One of the first things he did on going to Medîna, was to make a close and firm treaty with them.

The fact is that, by their present act in joining Mahomet, the Medîna converts were to outward appearance drawing nearer to the Jews, rather than "cutting their bonds with them."

* Though there were seventy-three men, yet by tradition they are ordinarily called "the Seventy."

† Literally: "*Hush your bells.*"

‡ As usual in such meritorious actions, other claimants of the honour are brought forward. The Bani Najjâr say that Asâd was the *first* that struck the hand of Mahomet; and the Bani Abd al Ashal, that it was Abul Haytham. *Hishâmi*, p. 151; *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 42½; *Tabari*, p. 172.

The Second pledge of Acaba.

one, and did the same.* And Mahomet named twelve of the chief men and said;—*Moses chose from amongst his people twelve Leaders. Ye shall be the sureties for the rest, even as were the Apostles of Jesus; and I am the surety for my people.* And all answered; "Be it so."† At this moment the

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Abu Bara, who bore so conspicuous a part throughout this transaction, died the next month (*Safar*, *i.e.* May 622 A.D.) *before* Mahomet reached Medina. He is said to have been the first over whose grave Mahomet prayed in the formula that became usual afterwards:—*Oh Lord pardon him! Be merciful unto him! Be reconciled unto him! And verily thou art reconciled.* He is said to have left a third of his property to Mahomet to dispose of as he chose: and to have desired that he should be buried with his face towards the *Meccan* Kibla. The latter point has reference to a curious fiction that Barâ *anticipated* the divine command (declared a year and a half later,) that Mussulmans were to turn in prayer to the Kaaba, and not as hitherto to the Temple at Jerusalem. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 299.

* The women, it is said, only repeated the words of the pledge taken by the twelve at the *first* Acaba. Mahomet never took a woman by the hand on such an occasion: but they used to step forward and recite the prescribed words; and then Mahomet would say,—"Go: for you have pledged yourselves." *Hishâmi*, p. 157.

† *Nackîb*, or "Leader," is the term, which was ever after honourably retained by the twelve. Four of them, Abul Haytham, Asâd, Râfi ibn Mâlik, and Obâda ibn Sâmit, were also of the number who met Mahomet here on the *two* previous pilgrimages. Only *three* were of the Aws tribes, the rest Khazrajites. Several of them, as well as many amongst the seventy, are mentioned as able to *write* Arabic; and as being *Kâmil*, *i.e.* expert in writing, in archery, and in swimming. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 285½.

According to Hishâmi, Mahomet desired the seventy *themselves* to choose their Leaders. The Kâtib al Wâckidi, on the contrary,

voice of one calling aloud, probably a straggler seeking for his company, was heard near at hand. The excited fancy or apprehensions of the party conjured up a Meccan, if not an infernal spy. Mahomet gave the command, and all hurried back to their halting places.* Thus passed the memorable night of the SECOND PLEDGE OF ACABA.

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not only says that Mahomet chose them, but that he added, "Let no one among you be vexed because another than he is chosen: for it is Gabriel that chooseth," p. 42½. Hishâmi quotes poetry by Kâb (who was himself present on the occasion,) in which the names of the twelve are enumerated; and it is probably genuine.

* Both the Kâtib al Wâckidi and Hishâmi make the voice to have been that of a Devil or Demon.

"And when the ceremony was ended, the Devil called out with a loud voice—*Ye people of Mecca! Have ye no concern for Mahomet and his renegades? They have counselled war against you.*" *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 42½. So Hishâmi:—When we had pledged ourselves to the Prophet, Satan called out with such a piercing cry as I never heard before,—*Oh ye that are encamped round about! Have ye no care for* MUDZAMMAM (the "blamed," a soubriquet for Mahomet,) *and the renegades that are with him? They have resolved upon war with you.* Then said Mahomet;—"This is the demon of Acaba; this is the Son of the Devil. Hearest thou, enemy of God? Verily I will ease myself of thee!" p. 151. The word used is *Azabb*.

* هذا ازب العقبه هذا ابن ازيب

So at the battle of Ohad, he that cried "Mahomet is fallen," is called "the Demon of Acaba, that is to say the Devil;" *Azabb al Acaba yâni al Sheitân. Hishâmi*, p. 258. We shall meet the Devil (who is easily conjured up by tradition) again, at the council of the Coreish to put Mahomet to death; and it will be remembered that he appeared in order to oppose Mahomet at the placing of the corner stone when the Kaaba was rebuilt. Chapter II. p. 39, note.

Weil has mistaken the word for Izb or *Azab*, "a Dwarf." *Mohammad*, p. 75.

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The Coreish, suspicions of the hostile movement, challenge the Medina chiefs.

So large a gathering could not be held close by Minâ, without rumours reaching the Coreish enough to rouse their suspicion. It was notorious that great numbers at Medîna had embraced the doctrines of Mahomet. The clandestine meeting must have been on his behalf; and, therefore, an unwarrantable interference with the domestic affairs of Mecca. It was virtually a hostile movement. Accordingly, next morning their chief men repaired to the encampment of the Medîna pilgrims,* stated their suspicions, and complained of such conduct at the hand of a tribe with whom, of all the tribes throughout Arabia, they declared, it would grieve them most to be at war. The converts glanced

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Both the Kâtib al Wâckidi and Hishâmi add that Abbâs son of Obadâ said to Mahomet:—"If thou wishest it, we shall now fall upon the people assembled here at Minâ with the sword." And no one had a sword that day but he. Mahomet replied, "I have not received any command to do thus: depart to your homes." But the circumstance is most improbable.

Some authorities affirm that the "command to fight" was received and promulgated by Mahomet at this time. But there is no reason for believing that any such command was given, till long after the emigration to Mecca. Sprenger (p. 207) appears to be at fault here. Hishâmi (p. 157) and Tabari (p. 181) speak of the command to fight; but the Secretary of Wâckidi has nothing of it; and Tabari elsewhere (p. 190) says that the emigration to Medîna *preceded* the command to fight. Indeed armed opposition was not practicable till long after. Mahomet and his followers were too glad to escape peaceably.

* Literally the "Sheb," *glen*, or defile, in which they were encamped.

at each other, and held their peace.* The rest, ignorant of their comrades' proceedings, protested that the Coreish had been misinformed, and that the report was utterly without foundation. Their chief, Abdallah ibn Obey, assured them that none of his people would venture on such a step without consulting him. The Coreish were satisfied, and took their leave.

They pursue the Medina caravan.

During that day, the vast concourse at Minâ broke up. The numerous caravans again prepared for their journey, and took each its homeward course. The Medina party had already set out, when the Coreish having strictly enquired into the midnight assembly, (which Mahomet hardly cared now to keep a secret,) found to their confusion, that not only had it really taken place, but that far larger numbers than they suspected had pledged themselves to the defence of Mahomet. Foiled and

* Hishâmi relates a story told by Kâb, one of the Covenanters, that while this inquisition was going on, in order to divert attention, he pointed to a new pair of shoes which one of the Meccan Chiefs had on, and said to Abu Jâbir, one of his own party:—"Why could'st thou not, *our* Chief, wear a pair of new shoes like this Coreishite Chief?" The latter taking off the shoes, threw them at Kâb, saying, "put them on thyself." Abu Jâbir said, "Quiet! give back the shoes." Kâb refused, and the Meccan Chief said he would snatch them from him. A commotion ensued, which was just what Kâb desired, as it covered the awkwardness of the converts. *Hishâmi*, p. 151.

Such tales, containing supposed proofs of service rendered to the cause of Islâm, were plentifully fabricated, even in the earliest times, and deserve little credit.

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And maltreat one of the converts.

exasperated, they pursued the Medîna caravan in the hope that they might lay hands on some of the delinquents; but, though they scoured the roads leading to Medîna, they fell in with only two. Of these one escaped. The other, Sâd ibn Obâda, they seized and, tying his hands behind his back, dragged him by his long hair to Mecca. There he would no doubt have suffered farther maltreatment, had he not been able to claim protection from certain of the Coreish to whom he had rendered service at Medîna. He was released, and rejoined the caravan just as his friends were about to return in search of him.

The Meccans *engaged*, recommence persecution;

It soon became evident to the Meccans that, in consequence of the covenant entered into at Acaba, both Mahomet and his followers contemplated an early emigration to Medîna. The prospect of such a movement, which would remove their opponents entirely out of reach, and plant them in an asylum where they might securely work out their machinations and, when opportunity offered, take an ample revenge,—at first irritated the Coreish. They renewed, after a long cessation, the persecution of the believers: and, wherever they had the power, sought either to make them recant, or by confinement to prevent their escape.*

* *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 43. The support of the Medîna adherents, and the suspicion of an *intended* emigration, irritated the

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Such severities, or the dread of them, (for the Moslems were conscious that they had now seriously compromised their allegiance as citizens of Mecca,) hastened the crisis. And, indeed, when Mahomet had once resolved upon a general emigration, no advantage was to be gained by protracting their residence amongst enemies. and precipitated the departure of the converts.

It was but a few days after the "second pledge of Acaba," that Mahomet gave command to his followers, saying;—*Depart unto Medina; for the Lord hath verily given you brethren in that city, and a home in which ye may find refuge.** So they made Mahomet gives command for them to emigrate to Medina.

Coreish to severity, and this severity forced the Moslems to petition Mahomet for leave to emigrate. The two causes might co-exist and re-act on one another;—the persecution would hasten the departure of the converts, while each fresh departure would irritate the Coreish to greater cruelty.

Tabari says:—"There were two occasions on which persecution raged the hottest; viz. *first*, the period preceding the emigration to Abyssinia; *second*, that following the second covenant at Acaba," (p. 178).

But there is good reason to suspect that stronger epithets have been used in tradition regarding this persecution than are warranted by facts. Had it been as bad as is spoken of, *we should have had plenty of instances.* Yet, excepting the imprisonment or surveillance of a few waverers, we have not a single detail of any injuries or sufferings inflicted on this occasion by the Coreish. There was, no doubt, abundant *apprehension*, and good ground for it.

* The Kâtib al Wâckidi makes Mahomet first to see the place of emigration in a dream,—"a saline soil, with palm trees, between two hills." After that, he waited some days, and then went forth joyously to his followers, saying:—"Now have I been made acquainted with the place appointed for your emigration. It is *Yathreb*. Whoso desireth to emigrate, let him emigrate

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preparation, chose companions for the journey, and set out in parties secretly. Such as had the means rode two and two upon camels, and the rest walked.*

Some fall away through persecution. Story of Ayâsh.

Persecution and artifice caused a few to fall away from the faith. One example will suffice. Omar had arranged a rendezvous with Ayâsh and Hishâm at a spot in the environs of Mecca, whence they were to set out for Medîna. Hishâm was held back by his family, and relapsed for a time into idolatry. "Thus I, and Ayâsh," relates Omar, "went forward alone, and journeyed to Cubâ† in the outskirts of Medîna, where we alighted, and were hospitably received at the house of Rifâa. But Abu Jahl, and another brother of Ayâsh,‡ followed him to Medîna, and told him that his mother had vowed she would retire beneath no shade, nor should a comb or any oil touch her hair, until she saw his face again. Then I cautioned him (continues Omar,) saying;—"By the Lord! they only desire to tempt thee from

thither," p. 43. If this incident be real, the first vision may have been a sort of feeler to try what his people thought of going to Medîna; for, long before this time, he must have fully made up his own mind where he was going. But the story is most probably a fiction, growing out of the idea that Mahomet must have had a divine and special command for so important a step as that of emigration to Medîna.

* *Katîb al Wâckidi*, pp. 43, 242.

† A suburb of Medîna, about three quarters of an hour's walk on the road to Mecca. *Burkhardt*, p. 328; *Burton*, vol. ii. chap. xix.

‡ A uterine brother; they were all three sons of Asmâ, a lady of the Tâmîm tribe, but by different fathers.

thy religion.* Beware, Ayâsh! of denying thy faith." But he replied;—"Nay, I will not recant. But I have property at Mecca. I will go and fetch it, and it will strengthen me. And I will also release my mother from her vow." Seeing that he was not to be diverted from his purpose, I gave him a swift camel and bade him, if he suspected treachery, to save himself thereon. So when they alighted to halt at Dhajnân, they seized him suddenly, and bound him with cords; and, as they carried him into Mecca, they exclaimed;—*Even thus, ye Meccans, should ye treat your foolish ones!* Then they kept him in durance.†

It was about the beginning of the month Mu- The emigration begins in

* In Hishâmi it is added;—"And the heat and lice will soon enough force thy mother to break her vow," p. 160.

† *Kâmil al Wâckidi*, p. 232½; *Hishâmi*, p. 160. Both Ayâsh and Hishâm afterwards rejoined Mahomet. From one account it would appear that Ayâsh as well as Hishâm, relapsed into idolatry. Omar stated that until Sura xxxix. v. 53, was revealed, it was thought that no apostate could be saved. When that passage appeared, he wrote it out for Ayâsh, and sent it to him at Mecca; which when Ayâsh had read, he took courage, and forthwith quitted Mecca on his camel for Medina. *Hishâmi*, p. 161.

There is another tradition, at variance with the above. Mahomet when at Medîna, said one day, "Who will bring me Ayâsh and Hishâm from Mecca?" And forthwith Walid, son of Mughîra, set out; and he traced them to their place of confinement, and assisted them with a stone and his sword to break off their fetters, and, having released them carried them off to Mahomet. *Ibid.* But, notwithstanding the details in this version, it is evidently a fiction to *justify* Ayâsh and Hishâm from the charge of apostacy, by making it appear that they were imprisoned at Mecca.

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the middle of April 622 A.D.

harram that the emigration commenced.* Medîna lies some 250 miles to the north of Mecca. The journey is accomplished by the pilgrim caravans "in eleven days, and if pressed for time, in ten."† Within two months, nearly all the followers of Mahomet, excepting the few detained in confinement, or unable to escape from slavery, had migrated with their families to their new abode. They num-

And goes on for about two months.

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* Abu Salma was the first that set out. He reached Medîna on the 10th Muharram (end of April). *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 225½. His wife Omm Salma (afterwards married by Mahomet) tells a piteous story, that they started for Medîna *a year before the second covenant* of Acaba. Being attacked on the way, her husband escaped to Medîna, but she and her infant Salma were kept in durance by her family, the Bani Mughîra. Her infant was taken from her, and she "wept for a year," after which they were all happily re-united at Medîna. She ends by saying:—"there was no family that endured such hardships in the cause of Islam, as that of Abu Salma." *Hishâmi*, p. 159. We see here, 1st, the desire of magnifying suffering for Islam: and 2ndly, the vain-glorious wish of appearing to be the *earliest* emigrants. For we know from Wâckidi, that Abu Salma did not emigrate till two months before Mahomet, and several days *after* the second covenant of Acaba.

The next that emigrated was Amir ibn Rabîa with his wife Laila. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 43½; *Hishâmi*, p. 159. Then Abdallah ibn Jahsh, and his wife, a daughter of Abu Sofiân.

† *Burkhardt*, p. 316. See also *Burton*, vol. ii. pp. 329, 331. The *Tayyara* or "Flying Caravan" goes in less time. "The Rakb" is a dromedary caravan, in which each person carries only his saddle bags. It usually descends (from Medîna) by the road called El Khabt, and makes Mecca on the *fifth* day.

In vol. iii. p. 147, the stages by the Najd, or eastern route, travelled by Burton, are given as eleven, and the distance estimated at 248 miles.

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bered between one and two hundred souls.* They were received with cordial and eager hospitality by their brethren at Medîna, who vied with one another for the honour of having them quartered in their houses, and supplying them with such things as they had need of.†

The Coreish were paralysed by a movement so suddenly planned, and put into such early and extensive execution. They looked on in amazement, as families silently disappeared, and house after house was abandoned. One or two quarters of the city were entirely deserted, and the doors of the dwelling houses left deliberately locked.‡

The Coreish paralysed by this sudden movement.

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* We have no exact enumeration of the numbers that emigrated at first with Mahomet. At the battle of Badr, nineteen months after the emigration, there were present 314 men, of whom *eighty-three* were emigrants from Mecca. A few of these may have joined Mahomet after he reached Medîna; and we shall probably not err far in making the whole number that emigrated *at first*, including women and children, about 150. At Badr almost every one of the emigrants, who could, was present. For the numbers see *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 259½.

† *Ibid.* p. 43½; *Hishâmi*, p. 163.

‡ "The Bani Ghanam ibn Dûdân," says the Kâtib al Wâckidi, "emigrated entirely to Medîna, men and women, and left their houses locked: not a soul was to be seen in the quarters of the Bani Ghanam, Abul Bokeir, and Matzûn," pp. 196 and 256½. *Hishâmi*, p. 160.

"Otba, Abbâs, and Abu Jahl passed by the dwelling-place of the Bani Jahsh, and the door was locked, and the house deserted. And Otba sighed heavily, and said, 'Every house, even if its peace be lengthened, at the last a bitter wind will reach it. The quarter of the Bani Jahsh is left without an inhabitant!' Then

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There was here a determination and sacrifice hardly calculated upon. But even if the Coreish had foreseen, and resolved to oppose, the emigration, it is difficult to perceive what preventive measures they could have adopted. The multitude of independent clans and separate branches effectually prevented unity of action. Here and there a slave or helpless dependent might be intimidated or held back; but in all other cases there was no right to interfere with private judgment or with family counsels; and the least show of violence might rouse a host of champions, who would forget their antipathy to Islam in revenging the insulted honour of their tribe.

Mahomet, Abu Bakr, and Ali, remain behind.

At last Mahomet and Abu Bakr, with their families, including Ali, now a youth of above twenty years of age, were the only believers left (excepting those unwillingly detained) at Mecca. Abu Bakr was ambitious of being the companion of the prophet in his flight; and daily urged him to depart. But Mahomet told him that "his time was not yet come:—the Lord had not given him the command to emigrate." Perhaps he was deferring his departure until he could receive assurance from Medina, that the arrangements for his reception were secure, and his adherents there

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he added; 'This is the work of our good-for-nothing nephew, who hath dispersed our assemblies, ruined our affairs, and made a separation amongst us.'" *Hishâmi*, p. 160.

not only ready, but able in the face of the rest of the people, to execute their engagement for his defence.* Or, there may have been the more generous desire to see all his followers safely out of Mecca, before he himself fled for refuge to Medîna. Might we conjecture that he was waiting with the undefined hope that a divine interposition, as with the prophets of old, was about to subdue or overthrow the unbelieving and devoted city, in which peradventure even ten righteous men could not now be found?

Preparations of Abu Bakr.

Meanwhile Abu Bakr made preparations for the journey. In anticipation of the emergency, he had already purchased, for 800 dirhems, two swift camels, which were now tied up and highly fed in the yard of his house. A guide, accustomed to the devious tracks and byways of the Medîna route, was hired; and the camels were committed to his custody.†

* During the two months elapsing between the second covenant at Acaba and Mahomet's emigration, communications, as might have been expected, were kept up between Mecca and Medîna. Thus, it is stated by the Kâtib al Wâckidi that, after the foremost emigrants had reached Medîna, a part of the Medîna converts who had been at the Acaba covenant returned to Mecca, where no doubt further arrangements were concerted between them, and Mahomet. It is added that these Medîna converts had thus the merit of being both *Emigrants* (Muhâjirin,) and *Adjutors* (Ansâr).

† The guide was Abdallah ibn Arcad; or as the Kâtib al Wâckidi has it, Abdallah ibn Oreicat. He was of the Bani Duil,

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Council of the Coreish.

The Coreish were perplexed at the course which Mahomet was taking. They had expected him to emigrate with his people; and perhaps half rejoiced at the prospect of being rid of their enemy. By remaining almost solitary behind, he seemed by his very loneliness to challenge and defy their attack. What might his motive be for this strange procedure? The chief men assembled to discuss their position. Should they imprison him? —his followers would come to his rescue. Should they forcibly expel him?—he might agitate his cause among the tribes of Arabia, and readily lure adherents by the prospect of supremacy at Mecca. Should they assassinate him?—the Bani Hâshim would exact an unrelenting penalty for the blood of their kinsman. But representatives from every tribe, including even that of Hâshim, might plunge each his sword into the prophet; would the Hâshimites dare to wage a mortal feud with the whole body of the Coreish thus implicated in the

Their deliberations.

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a tribe descended from Kinâna; and thus affiliated with the Coreish. His mother was pure Coreish.

He was still an idolator; and Wâckidi, *anticipating the era when war was waged against all idolators*, adds,—"but Mahomet and Abu Bakr had given him quarter,—or pledge of protection;" —وكان لا—as if he required any protection then from the fugitives he was guiding! The expression is significant of the way in which subsequent principles and events insensibly threw back their light and colour upon the tissue of tradition. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 212; *Hishâmi*, p. 167.

murder?—Even then there would remain his followers at Medina, whose revenge of their master's blood would surely be ruthless and desperate. Assassination by an unknown hand on the road to Medina, might prove the safest course;—but there the chances of escape would preponderate. At last they resolved that a deputation should proceed to the house of Mahomet.

Chiefs deputed to visit Mahomet.

What was the decision as to their future course of action, what the object even of the present deputation, it is impossible, amid the hostile and marvellous tales of tradition, to conclude. There is little reason to believe that it was assassination, although the traditionists assert that this was determined upon at the instigation of Abu Jahl, supported by the Devil who, in the person of an old man from Najd shrouded in a mantle, joined the council. Mahomet himself, speaking in the Coran of the designs of his enemies, refers to them in these indecisive terms:—"*And call to mind when the unbelievers plotted against thee, that they might detain thee, or slay thee, or expel thee. Yea, they plotted;—but God plotted likewise. And God is the best of plotters.*"* Assuredly had assassination been the sentence, and its immediate execution (as pretended by tradition) ordered by the council, Mahomet would have indicated the fact in clearer language than these alternative expressions. A resolution

* Sura viii. v. 29.

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so fatal would unquestionably have been dwelt upon at length both in the Coran and tradition, and produced as a justification (for such indeed it would have been) of all subsequent hostilities.*

* The following is the general narrative of tradition, given with some variations by the Kâtib al Wâckidi and Hishâmi;—Tabari following mainly the latter.

The Coreish, irritated by hearing of the warm reception the converts experienced at Medîna, held a council to discuss the matter. The Devil, in the shape of an old man, shrouded in a cloak, stood at the door, saying that he was a Sheikh from Najd, who had heard of their weighty consultation, and had come, if haply he might help them to a right decision. So they invited him to enter.

One proposed to imprison, another to expel, Mahomet. The old man from Najd warmly opposed both suggestions. Then said Abu Jahl;—"Let us choose one courageous man from every family of the Coreish, and place in their hands sharp swords, and let the whole slay him with the stroke of one man; so his blood will be divided amongst all our families, and the relatives of Mahomet will not know how to revenge it." The old man of Najd applauded the scheme, saying:—"May God reward this man; this is the right advice, and none other." And they separated, having agreed to follow it.

Gabriel forthwith apprised Mahomet of the design, who arose and made Ali to lie down upon his bed. The murderous party came at dusk, and lay in wait about the house. Mahomet went forth, and casting a handful of dust at them, recited from the 1st to the 10th verses of Sura xxxiv. ending with the words; *and* WE *have covered them, so that they shall not see.* So he departed without their knowing what had passed; and they continued to watch, some say, till morning, thinking that the figure on the bed was Mahomet. As light dawned, they found out their mistake, and saw that it was Ali. Others say they watched till some one passed and told them that Mahomet had left, when they arose in confusion and shook from their heads the dust which Mahomet had cast upon them.

Had such a resolution ever been formed, it *must* have reached the ears of Mahomet sooner or later.

Whatever the object of the visit, Mahomet received previous notice of it, and anticipated the danger by

Mahomet and Abu Bakr escape to the cave of Thaur.

The whole story of the council and the attempt on Mahomet's life is so mingled with what is marvellous and unlikely, as to render it almost impossible to disentangle the truth, or even a consistent and probable story, from the spurious details. Indeed there is some reason for suspecting with Sprenger "the whole story of the council, and the resolution of assassinating him, to be apocryphal," p. 208. Parts of the story are evidently fabricated to illustrate or support the verse of the Coran above quoted, and the other regarding the counter-plot of God, (*Sura* vii. v. 29);—and to cover the opponents of Mahomet with infamy.

The reasons given in the text make it in the last degree improbable that *assassination* was ever *attempted or even resolved upon*. The tale of the assassins surrounding the house for so long a period in the face of Mahomet's family and kinsmen, even apart from the miraculous details, is absurd. If intent on murder, they would at once have rushed on Ali, and finding their mistake, have set off for Abu Bakr's house, (*vide Sprenger, ibidem*). The clear intimation in the Kâtib al Wâckidi that Mahomet left for the house of Abu Bakr *in the middle of the day*, is also opposed to the whole story.

Mahomet's sudden flight, and long concealment in the cave, were probably supposed by his followers to have been caused by the apprehension of immediate violence. This supposition would require illustrative grounds: and hence the fiction. It seems to me, however, that it was not violence at Mecca, but *assassination by the way*, which he most feared, and which led to his concealment in the cave till the pursuit had ceased, and thus to the securing of a free and safe road.

Upon the whole, *the council itself* is not unlikely or improbable: and I have therefore given it a place in the text, endeavouring to adapt it as well as possible to the other incidents that are clearly proved.

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stealing away at once from his house. There he left Ali; around whom, that the suspicions of his neighbours might not be aroused, he threw his own red Hadhramaut mantle,* and desired him to occupy his bed. He went straight to the house of Abu Bakr, and after a short consultation matured the plans for an immediate flight. Abu Bakr shed tears of joy; the hour for emigration had at last arrived, and he was to be the companion of the prophet's journey.† After a few hasty preparations

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* *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 43½. Hishâmi calls it *green*, p. 165.

† Ayesha, in a somewhat loose tradition quoted by Hishâmi, relates as follows;—Mahomet regularly visited her father's house either in the morning or the evening; that day, however, he came at mid-day. Being seated on Abu Bakr's carpet, Mahomet desired that he and Abu Bakr might be left alone. The latter replied that the presence of his two daughters did not signify, and besought that he would at once communicate what he had to say. Then follows the conversation in which Mahomet tells him that the time had now come for emigrating, and that Abu Bakr was to be his fellow traveller;—at which Abu Bakr wept for joy. Ayesha adds;—"I never knew before that any body could *weep* for joy, till I saw Abu Bakr weeping that day." *Hishâmi*, p. 166. There is of course a tendency in all Ayesha's traditions to magnify her father's share in the matter.

Tabari gives a tradition to the effect that Abu Bakr proceeded to the house of Mahomet. Ali, whom he found there alone, told him that Mahomet had gone to the cave in Mount Thaur and that, if he wanted him, he should follow him thither. So he hurried in that direction, and made up on Mahomet by the way. And as he approached, the Prophet hearing the footsteps thought that it was the Coreish in pursuit, and he quickened his pace and ran, and burst the thong of his shoe, and struck his foot against a rock, so that it bled much. Then Abu Bakr called aloud, and

(among which Abu Bakr did not forget to secure his remaining wealth), they both crept in the shade of evening through a back window, escaped unobserved from the southern suburbs of the city, and ascending the lofty mountain Thaur (about an hour and a half's journey to the south,) took refuge in a cave near its summit.* Here they rested in security, for the attention of their adversaries would in any case be fixed upon the country *north* of Mecca and the route to Medîna, whither they knew that Mahomet would proceed.

The cave referred to in the Coran.

Eight or nine years after, Mahomet thus alludes in the Coran to the position of himself and his friend in the cave of Thaur:—

If ye will not assist the Prophet, verily God assisted him when the unbelievers cast him forth, in company with a second only;

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the prophet recognized his voice, and they went both together; and blood flowed from Mahomet's leg, till they reached the cave at break of day, p. 187.

Notwithstanding the apparent freshness and circumstantiality of these details, the story is no doubt spurious. It looks like an Alyite or Abasside tale fabricated to detract from the honour of Abu Bakr in being *selected* by the prophet as the companion of his flight, by representing it as an accidental, and not a previously planned, arrangement.

* Hishâmi describes it as "a hill in Lower Mecca:" جبل باسفل ـكـ—*i.e.* adjoining the lower or southern quarter.

The following is from Burkhardt. "JEBEL THOR. About an hour and a half south of Mecca, to the left of the road to the village of Hosseynye, is a lofty mountain of this name, higher it is said than Djebel Nour. On the summit of it is a cavern, in which Mohammad and his friend Abu Bekr took refuge from the

—when they two were in the cave alone;* when the Prophet said unto his companion:—*Be not cast down, for verily God is with us.* And God caused to descend tranquility† upon him, and strengthened him with Hosts which ye saw not, and made the word of the Unbelievers to be abased; and the word of the Lord, it is exalted; and God is mighty and wise.‡

Abu Bakr "the Second of the Two."

The "sole companion," or in Arabic phraseology the *Second of the two*, became one of Abu Bakr's most honoured titles. Hassân, the contemporary poet of Medîna, thus sings of him:—

And the Second of the two in the Glorious Cave, while the Foes were searching around, and they two had ascended the Mountain;

And the Prophet of the Lord, they well knew, loved him,—more than all the world; he held no one equal unto him.§

Mekkawys before he fled to Medîna," p. 176. But he did not visit the spot. Nor does Ali Bey appear to have done so either.

* Lit. *the second of the two* ثانی اثنین

† The word used is سكينة *sekînah:* borrowed from the "Shekinah" of the Jews. The expression occurs repeatedly in the Coran.

‡ Sura ix. *v.* 42.

§ Mahomet asked Hassân ibn Thâbit, whether he had composed any poetry regarding Abu Bakr; to which the poet answered that he had, and at Mahomet's request repeated the following lines, (as in the text);—

* وثانی اثنین فی الغار المنیف وقد طاف العدو به اذ صعد الجبلا

* وکان حب رسول الله قد علموا من الهریه لم یعدل به رجلا

And Mahomet was amused by it, and laughed so heartily as even to show his back teeth: and he answered—"Thou hast spoken truly, Oh Hassan! It is just as thou hast said." *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 212.

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Whatever may have been the real peril, Mahomet and his companion felt it to be a moment of jeopardy. Glancing upward at a crevice whence the morning light broke into the cave, Abu Bakr whispered;—"What if one of them were to look beneath him; he might see us under his very feet!" "*Think not thus, Abu Bakr!*" said the Prophet, "WE ARE TWO, BUT GOD IS IN THE MIDST, A THIRD."* Their alarm.

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* فقال يا ابابكر ما ظنك باثنين الله ثالثهما *Ibid.*

The crowd of miracles that cluster about the Cave, are so well known as hardly to need repetition. It will be interesting, however, to note how far they are related by our early authorities.

The Kâtib al Wâckidi says that after Mahomet and Abu Bakr entered, a spider came and wove her webs one over the other at the mouth of the cave. The Coreish hotly searched after Mahomet in all directions, till they came close up to the entrance. And when they looked, they said one to another;—*Spiders' webs are over it from before the birth of Mahomet.* So they turned back, p. 44.

Another tradition is that "God commanded a tree and a spider to cover his prophet, and two wild pigeons to perch at the entrance of the cave. Now two men from each branch of the Coreish, armed with swords, issued from Mecca for the pursuit. And they were now close to Mahomet, when the foremost saw the pigeons, and returned to his companions, saying that he was sure from this that nobody was in the cave. And the prophet heard his words, and blessed the wild pigeons, and made them sacred in the Holy Territory. *Ibidem.*

The verses (quoted in the text,) in Sura viii. v. 29, about God *plotting* so as to deceive the Meccans, and in Sura ix. v. 42, about God *assisting* the two refugees in the cave, have probably given rise to these tales.

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Food and intelligence conveyed to them.

Amir ibn Foheirah, the freed man of Abu Bakr,* who tended his master's flock, in company with the other shepherds of Mecca, stole unobserved every evening with a few goats to the cave, and furnished its inmates with a plentiful supply of milk. Abdallah, the son of Abu Bakr, in the same manner, nightly brought them food cooked by his sister Asmâ.† It was his business also to watch closely by day the progress of events and of opinion at Mecca, and to report the result at night.

Search after Mahomet.

Much excitement had prevailed in the city, when the disappearance of Mahomet was first noised abroad. The chief of the Coreish went to his house, and finding Ali there, asked where his uncle was. "I have no knowledge of him," replied Ali: —"am I his keeper? Ye bade him to quit the city, and he hath quitted."‡ Then they repaired

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There are some miraculous stories, but of later growth, regarding Abu Bakr putting his hand into the crevices of the cave to remove the snakes that might be lurking there, and being unharmed by their venomous bites.

* See chap. iv. p. 107.

† Hishâmi says that Asmâ also used to take them food at night. This is doubtful; but she certainly carried to them the victuals prepared for the journey, on the third day. Hishâmi adds, Amir ibn Foheira used to lead his goats over the footsteps of Abdallah in order to obliterate the traces. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, pp. 44, 212; *Hishâmi*, p. 167.

‡ *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 44; *Tabari*, p. 189. The latter adds:—"Thereupon they chided Ali, and struck him, and carried him forth to the Kaaba, and bound him for a short space, and then let

to the house of Abu Bakr, and questioned his daughter Asmà.* Failing to elicit from her any information, they despatched scouts in all directions, with the view of gaining a clue to the track and destination of the prophet, if not with less innocent instructions. But the precautions of Mahomet and Abu Bakr rendered it a fruitless search. One by one the emissaries returned with no trace of the fugitives; and it was believed that, having gained a fair start, they had outstripped pursuit. The people soon reconciled themselves to the idea. They even breathed more freely now that their troubler was gone. The city again was still.

After three days, Mahomet and Abu Bakr resolve to quit the cave.

On the third night, the tidings brought by Abdallah satisfied the refugees that the search had ceased, and the busy curiosity of the first agitation relaxed. The opportunity was come. They could slip away unobserved now. A longer delay might excite suspicion, and the visits of Abdallah and Amir attract attention to the cave. The roads were clear; they might travel without the appre-

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him go." The notice is, however, quite unsupported by any other proof or collateral evidence; and is evidently fabricated to enhance the merits of Ali.

* Hishâmi has the following:—"Asma relates that after the prophet went forth, a company of the Coreish, with Abu Jahl, came to the house. As they stood at the door, she went forth to them. 'Where is thy father;' said they. 'Truly I know not where he is;' she replied. Upon which, Abu Jahl, who was a bad and impudent man, slapped her on the face with such force, that one of her ear-rings dropped," p. 168.

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hension (and it was a fear not unreasonable) of arrow or dagger from the wayside assassin.

Preparations for the journey.

Abdallah received the commission to have all things in readiness the following evening. The guide was instructed to wander about with the two camels near the summit of mount Thaur. Asmâ prepared food for the journey, and in the dusk carried it to the cave. In the hurry of the moment, she had forgotten the thong for fastening the wallet. So, tearing off her girdle, with one of the pieces she closed the wallet, and with the other fastened it to the camel's gear. From this incident Asmâ became honorably known in Islam as "She of the two Shreds."* Abu Bakr did not forget his money, and safely secreted among his other property a purse of between five and six thousand dirhems.†

They start for Medina 20th June, 622, A.D.

The camels were now ready. Mahomet mounted the swifter of the two, Al Caswâ, thenceforward

* ذات النطاقين *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, pp. 44, 212. ذات النطاق *Hishâmi*, p. 168. These little incidents add life and interest to the story. The names, "*the Second of the Two*," and "*She of the Shreds*," must have been current generally. They could hardly have been invented for the story, and are therefore corroborative of it.

† *Hishâmi*, p. 168. A curious tradition is given here. Abu Bakr's father, Abu Cuhâfa, now so old that he could not see, came to visit his grand-daughters, (Asmâ and Ayesha,) after Abu Bakr had departed as he thought with all his money, and to condole with them on being left without any means. To comfort the old man, Asmâ placed pebbles in a recess and, covering them with a cloth, made him feel them, and believe that it was his son's money which he had left behind; so the old man went away happy.

his favourite,* with the guide; and Abu Bakr having taken his servant Amir ibn Foheira behind him on the other,† they started. Descending from mount Thaur, and leaving the lower quarter of Mecca‡ a little to the right, they struck off by a track considerably to the left of the common road to Medîna; and, hurrying westward, sooned gained the vicinity of the sea-shore nearly opposite Osfân.§ The day of the flight was the 4th Rabî I. of the first year of the Hegira, or, by the calculations of M. Caussin de Perceval, the 20th June, A.D. 622.‖

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* Hishâmi adds that Mahomet refused to get on the camel until he had purchased it, or rather pledged himself to pay the price which Abu Bakr had given for it, p. 168.

† A tradition in the Kâtib al Wâckidi says that Amir rode upon a *third* camel, and that Mahomet getting tired on Al Caswa, changed to Abu Bakr's camel; the two others changing also, p. 212. This may be explained by the fact that when the party reached within a few stages of Medîna, the animals were so fatigued that they hired an extra camel and servant from the Bani Aslam. Thus they arrived at Medîna mounted upon *three* camels, which is no doubt the origin of the tradition referred to. *Ibid.* p. 171.

‡ *Hishâmi*, p. 170; *Tabari*, p. 194. سلك بهما الى اسفل مكة

§ Osfân is a pilgrim station at the present day, on the highway from Mecca to Medîna.

‖ *Hegira*, "emigration." Though referring *par excellence* to the flight of the prophet, it is also applicable to the emigration of all his followers who emigrated to Medîna *prior to the taking of Mecca;* and they are hence called *Muhâjirîn, i.e.* those who have undertaken the *hejira*, or the emigrants. We have seen that they commenced to emigrate from the 1st of Moharram, i.e. from the first month of the *Hegira era.*

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And safely escape the pursuit of the Meccans.

By morning, they had reached the Bedouin encampment of a party of the Bani Khuzâa. An Arab lady sat in the door of her tent ready to give food and drink to any travellers that might chance to pass that way. Mahomet and his followers were fatigued and thirsty (for the heat was extreme); and they gladly refreshed themselves with the milk which she offered them in abundance.* During the hottest part of the day, they rested at Cudeid. In the evening, thinking they were now at a safe enough distance from Mecca, they joined the common road. They had not proceeded far when they met one of the Meccan scouts returning on horseback. Surâca (for that was his name), seeing that he had small chance of success

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The chronology of M. C. de Perceval is supported by the notices of extreme heat. وذلك في ايام حارة *Hishâmi*, p. 171.

* Wâckidi here gives miraculous details omitted by Hishâmi. The former relates that it was a time of dearth, and the scarcity of fodder had so reduced the flocks, that they gave no milk. Omm Mâbad (the Arab lady) at first told them of her inability, in consequence, to entertain them. But there was in the corner of her tent a miserable goat, that not only gave no milk, but was so weak as to be disabled from accompanying the flocks to pasture. The prophet spied it, and going up prayed and touched its udders, which immediately filled with milk, and all drank to their hearts' content! *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 44.

Her husband, who had been absent, returned shortly after the party had left; and on his wife giving a description of the stranger, he perceived who it was, and said that he too would have gone with him if he had been at home.

Omm Mâbad herself is said to have emigrated to Medina and been converted. *Ibid.*

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single-handed against four opponents, offered no opposition; but on the contrary pledged his word that, if permitted to depart in peace, he would not reveal that he had met them.* The party proceeded. The prophet of Arabia was safe.

Tidings reach Mecca of their flight.

The first tidings that reached Mecca of the real course taken by Mahomet, were brought, two or three days after his flight from the cave, by a traveller from the Khuzâite camp at which he

* The marvellous tales and improbabilities connected with the story of Surâca are so great, that one is almost tempted to omit all mention of him as fictitious. Yet there may probably be this ground of truth that the fugitives did fall in with one of the scouts, or with a Meccan traveller coming the same road; and around a simple encounter the fiction has grown up.

The tale, as given by Hishâmi, is that the Meccans offered a reward of 100 camels to any one who would bring back Mahomet. Surâca had private intimation that a party on three camels had been seen on the Medina road, and forthwith set out in pursuit. When he had made up on them, his horse stumbled and threw him; then it sank in the earth and stuck fast. Mahomet, at Surâca's entreaty, prayed that it might be loosened, and it was accordingly freed. This happened over again; and then Surâca pledged himself to go back, and withdraw from their pursuit all the emissaries that were out in quest of Mahomet. He farther begged of Mahomet a writing in remembrance, which Abu Bakr having indited "on a bone, or a piece of paper, or a bit of cloth," threw down to him. Surâca picked it up and slipped it into his quiver. *He kept the whole transaction secret till after the capture of Mecca,* when he produced the writing as an introduction to the favour of Mahomet, and embraced Islam. *Hishâmi*, p. 169.

The traditions in the Kâtib al Wâckidi, though not quite so absurd as the above, are sufficiently marvellous, p. 44½.

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had rested. It was now certain, from his passing there, that he was bound for Medîna.*

Ali also quits for Medina.

Ali remained at Mecca three days after the departure of Mahomet, appearing every day in public, for the purpose of restoring the property placed by various persons in trust with his uncle. He met with no opposition or annoyance, and leisurely took his departure for Medina.†

Families of Mahomet and Abu Bakr unmolested at Mecca.

The families of Mahomet and Abu Bakr were equally unmolested. Zeinab continued for a time to dwell at Mecca with her unconverted husband. Rockeya had already emigrated with Othmân to Medîna. The other two daughters of Mahomet, Omm Kolthûm and Fâtima, with his wife Sawda, were for some weeks left behind at Mecca.‡ His

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* Here again we are surrounded with the marvellous. Asmâ relates that they waited three days without knowing whither the party had gone. Then one of the Genii, whose voice was heard but who could not be seen, entered Lower Mecca, passed through the town, and made his exit from Upper Mecca, singing all the while verses in praise of Omm Mâbad, the Khozâite lady, for her entertainment of Mahomet and Abu Bakr. From the position of this encampment, the people then knew which way Mahomet had taken. The very verses of the Genius are given both by Hishâmi and the Kâtib al Wâckidi; and the latter adds couplets by Hassân ibn Thâbit in reply to them. *Hishâmi*, p. 168; *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 44; *Tabari*, p. 197.

† *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 182; *Hishâmi*, p. 167, 172; *Tabari*, p. 200.

‡ Omm Kolthûm had been married to one of the sons of Abu Lahab, but was now living in her father's house. Zeinab's husband, Abul As, was still an unbeliever. It is said that he kept her back in Mecca in confinement. But subsequent events show

betrothed Ayesha, with the rest of Abu Bakr's family, and other females, likewise remained for a time.*

Forbearance of the Coreish.

Mahomet and Abu Bakr trusted their respective clans to protect their families from insult. But no insult or annoyance of any kind was offered by the Coreish. Nor was the slightest attempt made to detain them; although it was not unreasonable that they should have been detained as hostages against any hostile incursion from Medina. These facts lead us to doubt the intense hatred and bitter cruelty, which the strong colouring of tradition is ever ready to attribute to the Coreish.†

Thus ends the first grand period of the prophet's life. The next scene opens at Medina.

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that she was strongly attached to him. The story of their both joining Mahomet at Medina, sometime afterwards, is romantic and affecting. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 46; *Hishâmi*, p. 284.

* When Zeid was sent back from Medina to bring away Mahomet's family, he carried with him also his own wife Omm Ayman (*i.e.* Mahomet's old nurse, Baraka,) and his son Osâma, then a boy.

Similarly, Abdallah brought away the family of his father Abu Bakr, and Ayesha among the rest. *Kâtib al Wâckidi*, p. 46.

† In accordance with this view is the fact that the first aggressions, after the Hegira, were solely on the part of Mahomet and his followers. It was not until several of their caravans had been waylaid and plundered, and blood had thus been shed, that the people of Mecca were forced in self-defence to resort to arms.

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SUPPLEMENT TO CHAPTER SIXTH.

The teaching of Mahomet during the last stage at Mecca, and its effects.

Before dismissing from our view the career of Mahomet at Mecca, it will be useful to pause and enquire what had up to this time been his general teaching, and what its effect upon the people.

Style of the Coran during the period preceding the Flight.

The Coran continues, during the period reviewed in the foregoing chapter,* to be made up, as before, of arguments in refutation of idolatry and the idle objections of the Meccan people; of the proofs of God's omnipotence, omniscience, and unity; of vivid picturings of the Judgment, Heaven, and Hell; and of legendary and Scriptural stories. The great verities of a minute and over-ruling Providence, and of a final retribution, are sometimes illustrated by passages of exquisite imagery and living poetry. The bold impersonation of THUNDER, in the following quotation (which may be taken as a sample of the better portions of this period,) has given its name to the Sura from which it is taken:—

> Verily God changeth not His dealings with a People, until they change that which is in their Souls. And when God willeth Evil unto a People, there is none that can turn it away, nor have they any Protector beside them.
>
> It is He that showeth you the Lightning to inspire Fear and Hope; and raised the heavy Clouds.

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* The Suras of this period (*i.e.* from the 10th year of the Mission to the Hegira) will be found classed in their supposed order in the Appendix. Some of the later ones become very long, and include portions given forth at Medina, and added to them there. One striking feature of the closing Meccan Suras is the frequent allusion by Mahomet to the approaching emigration of himself and his followers.

The THUNDER doth celebrate His praise; and the Angels also, from awe of Him. And He sendeth forth His bolts: and shivereth therewith whom He pleaseth, while they are wrangling about God:—for He is terrible in might!

He only is rightly invoked. And these, whom they invoke beside Him, answer them not at all, otherwise than as one stretching forth both hands unto the water that it may reach his mouth, and it reacheth it not. So is the invocation of the unbelievers founded only in error.

And to God boweth down in worship whatsoever is in the Heavens, and in the Earth, voluntarily and by force; and their Shadows likewise in the morning and in the evening.*

Say:—Who is the Lord of the Heavens and of the Earth: Say—GOD. Say: Wherefore, then, do ye take besides Him guardians who have no power to do even their own selves a benefit nor an injury. Say:—What! Are the Blind and the Seeing equal? What! is the Darkness equal with the Light? Or do they give unto God partners that have created like unto His creation, so that the creation (of both) appear alike in their eyes? Say:—GOD is the Creator of all things. He is the ONE; the AVENGER!

He bringeth down from on high the Rain, and the Valleys flow, each according to its measure: and the Flood beareth the swelling Froth. And from that which men melt in the furnace, to make ornaments or vessels withal, ariseth a Scum, the like thereof. Thus doth God compare the Truth with Falsehood. As for the Scum it passeth away like Froth: but that which benefitteth mankind remaineth on the Earth.

Thus doth God put forth Similitudes.†

The positive precepts of this period are still very limited. The five times of prayer, it is said, were enjoined by God at the period of the prophet's ascent to heaven, one or two years before the Hegira.‡ All kinds of flesh were permitted for food, *if killed in* Positive precepts.

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* This, a conceit Mahomet was fond of. The Shadows perform obeisance to God, being long and prostrate in the morning, upright during the day, and again elongated in prostration in the evening.

† *Sura* xiii. 13–19.

‡ As yet, however, the five periods are nowhere distinctly commanded in the Coran. The nearest approach to such command is the following:—"Wherefore patiently bear with what they say, and celebrate the praise of thy Lord before the rising of the Sun, and before its setting: and praise Him sometime in the night, and in the extremities of the day, that thou mayest be pleasing unto him." *Sura* xx. 129. By *the extremities of the day*, is naturally understood the fall of day, and day-break. But some,—to reconcile the passage with the prescribed hours,—interpret it as signifying *mid-day*, at which as it were the day is divided into two parts.

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the name of the Lord,* but the blood, and that which dieth of itself, and the flesh of swine, were strictly prohibited.†

Some superstitions discountenanced.

While a few superstitions, by which the meat of animals was under certain circumstances held by the Arabs to be unlawful,‡ were denounced, and the practice of compassing the holy temple naked was proscribed as a device of Satan,§ the rites of Meccan pilgrimage were maintained. They were enjoined as of divine command, and propitious to true piety. It is probable that the Jews strongly objected to this new feature of the reformed faith, and we accordingly find a laboured defence of the innovation, which may be interesting to the reader;—

But the Meccan Pilgrimage and its rites maintained.

And call to remembrance when WE gave unto Abraham the place of the Temple (at Mecca); saying,—Join not in worship anything with me, and purify my house for them that compass it, and for them that stand up and bow down to pray.

And proclaim unto Mankind a pilgrimage, that they may come unto thee on foot, upon every lean camel,‖ flocking from every distant road:—that they may testify to the benefits they have received, and commemorate the name of God, on the appointed days, over the brute beasts which WE have given them for a provision:—Wherefore eat thereof and feed the wretched and the poor. Then let them stop the neglect of their persons,¶ and fulfil their vows, and compass the ancient House.

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* The same motives led to this condition, as to the Apostolical admonition to abstain from "pollutions of idols," and "meats offered to idols." Acts xv. 20, 29. The prohibition seems to point to the heathenish practice of the Meccans slaying their animals as a sacrifice to, or in the name of, their deities. *Suras* xvi. 115; vi. 118, 121, 145.

† References as above. The influence of Jewish habit and precept is here manifest. As to the references in the *later* Suras of this period, it is to be remembered that they were composed very near the time of the Hegira, and the habit was now formed of throwing into a former Sura newly revealed passages connected with its subject. It is possible therefore that some of the pieces quoted in this Supplement as Meccan, may have been in reality of later date; they may have been early Medina verses given forth after the emigration, and placed among the Meccan Suras.

‡ See *Sura* v. 112, where the names of the forbidden animals are quoted; vi. 136, 144; x. 59. See also the note at p. cclxix. of the Introduction, chap. iv.

§ *Sura* vii. 27–33. This was connected with the Homs: see Introduction, chap. iv. p. cclxviii.

‖ Lean and famished from the long journey.

¶ *i. e.* they might now again pare their nails, shave their heads, &c., and resume their ordinary dress. See Introd. ch. iii. p. ccv.

This do. And he that honoureth the sacred ordinances of God* is well for him with his Lord. The flesh of cattle is lawful unto you excepting that which hath been read unto you. Wherefore abstain from the pollutions of Idols and abstain from the false speech, following the Catholic faith unto God, not associating any with Him; for he that associateth any with God is like that which falleth from the Heavens, and the birds snatch it away, and the wind bloweth it into a distant place.

Hearken to this:—whosoever honoureth the Sacrifices of God,† verily they proceed from Purity of heart. From them (the victims) ye derive benefits until the appointed time: then they are brought for sacrifice unto the ancient House.

And unto every People have We appointed rites, that they may commemorate the name of God over the brute beasts He hath provided for them. And your God is ONE GOD; wherefore submit thyself unto Him and bear good tidings unto the Humble:—

Unto those whose hearts, when God is mentioned, tremble thereat:—and unto those that patiently bear what befalleth them and observe prayer, and spend in alms of that We have provided them with.

And the victims have We made unto you as ordinances‡ of God. From them ye receive benefit. Commemorate therefore the name of God over them as they stand disposed in a line, and when they fall slain upon their sides, eat thereof, and give unto the Poor both to him that is silent and him that beggeth. Thus have We given thee dominion over them that ye may be thankful.

Their Flesh is not accepted of God, nor yet their Blood: but your Piety is accepted of Him.§

Few and simple as the positive precepts of Mahomet up to this time thus appear, they had wrought a marvellous and a mighty work. Never, since the days when primitive Christianity startled the world from its sleep and waged a mortal combat with Heathenism, had men seen the like arousing of spiritual life,—the like faith that suffered sacrifice and took joyfully the spoiling of goods for conscience sake.

Mighty effect produced by the teaching of Mahomet.

From time beyond memory, Mecca and the whole Peninsula had been steeped in spiritual torpor. The slight and transient

Previous dark and torpid state of Mecca and Arabia.

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* شعائر الله *Rites, or Offerings*: but from what follows, *Victims* would seem to be here meant.

† The word signifies *Camels* offered in sacrifice, البدن

‡ Or *signs, symbols*. It is the same word as before,— شعائر

§ *Sura* xxii. 27–40.

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influences of Judaism, Christianity, or Philosophy, upon the Arab mind, had been but as the ruffling here and there of the surface of a quiet lake;—*all remained still and motionless below.* The people were sunk in superstition, cruelty, and vice. It was a common practice for the eldest son to marry his father's widows inherited as property with the rest of the estate.* Pride and poverty had introduced among them, as it has among the Hindus, the crime of female infanticide.† Their religion consisted in gross idolatry, and their faith was rather the dark superstitious dread of unseen beings, whose goodwill they sought to propitiate, and to avert their displeasure, than the belief in an over-ruling Providence. The Life to come and Retribution of good and evil were, as motives of action, practically unknown.

Effect produced on the Moslem converts by the thirteen years of Mahomet's ministry at Mecca.

Thirteen years before the Hegira, Mecca lay lifeless in this debased state. What a change had those thirteen years now produced! A band of several hundred persons had rejected idolatry, adopted the worship of the one great God, and surrendered themselves implicitly to the guidance of what they believed a revelation from Him;—praying to the Almighty with frequency and fervour, looking for pardon through His mercy, and striving to follow after good works, alms-giving, chastity, and justice. They now lived under a constant sense of the Omnipotent power of God, and of His providential care over the minutest of their concerns. In all the gifts of nature, in every relation of life, at each turn of their affairs individual or public, they saw His hand. And, above all, the new spiritual existence in which they joyed and gloried, was regarded as the mark of His especial grace; while the unbelief of their blinded fellow-citizens was the hardening stamp of His predestined reprobation. Mahomet was the Minister of life to them,—the source under God of their new-born hopes; and to him they yielded a fitting and implicit submission.

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* See an instance of this practice ("such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles,)" (1 *Cor.* v. i.) related above in note ‡ p. 52 of chap. ii.

† This custom Mahomet stringently proscribed, (*Sura* vi. 137, 140, 151); and it disappeared with the progress of Islām.

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In so short a period, Mecca had, from this wonderful move- Their sacrifices and abandonment of home.
ment, been rent into two factions, which, unmindful of the old land-marks of tribe and family, were arrayed in deadly opposition one against the other. The believers bore persecution with a patient and a tolerant spirit. And, though it was their wisdom so to do, the credit of a magnanimous forbearance may be freely accorded to them. One hundred men and women, rather than abjure the precious faith, had abandoned their homes, and sought refuge, till the storm should be overpast, in Abyssinian exile. And now, again, even a larger number, with the Prophet himself, emigrated from their fondly-loved city, with its sacred temple,—to them the holiest spot on earth,—and fled to Medina. There the same wonder-working charm had, within two or three years, prepared for them a brotherhood ready to defend the Prophet and his followers with their blood. Jewish truth had long sounded in the ears of the men of Medina; but it was not till they heard the spirit-stirring strains of the Arabian prophet, that they too awoke from their slumber, and sprang suddenly into a new and earnest life.

The virtues of his people shall now be described in the words Description of his followers by Mahomet.
of Mahomet himself;—

The servants of the Merciful are they that walk upon the earth softly; and, when the ignorant speak unto them, they reply PEACE!

They that spend the night worshipping their Lord, prostrate and standing;—

And that say,—Oh, our Lord! turn away from us the torment of Hell; verily, from the torment thereof there is no release. Surely it is an evil abode and resting-place!

Those that when they spend are neither profuse nor niggardly, but take a middle course;—

Those that invoke not with God any other God; and slay not a soul that God hath forbidden, otherwise than by right; and commit not Fornication;

(For he who doeth that is involved in sin,—

His torment shall be doubled unto him in the day of judgment: therein ignominiously shall he remain for ever,

Excepting him that shall repent and believe and perform righteous works; as for them God shall change their evil things into good things; and God is forgiving and merciful.

And whoever repenteth and doeth good works, verily, he turneth unto God with a true repentance.)—

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They who bear not witness to that which is false; and when they pass by vain sport, they pass it by with dignity:—

'They who, when admonished by the Revelations of the Lord, thereupon fall not down as if deaf and blind;—

Who say, "Oh, our Lord. Grant us of our wives and children such as shall be a comfort unto us, and make us examples unto the pious!"

These shall be rewarded with lofty mansions (in Paradise), for that they persevered; and they shall be accosted therein with Welcome and Salutation:—

For ever therein:—a fair Abode and Resting-place!

Praise not absolute; but in comparison with heathen Arabia.

When I speak, however, with praise of the virtues of the early Mussulmans, it is only in comparison with the state and habits of their heathen countrymen. Neither their tenets nor their practice will in any respect bear to come in competition with Christian, or even with Jewish, morality. This is plentifully illustrated by the actual working of the system when, shortly after at Medina, it had a free field for natural development.

Illustrated in the matter of Chastity.

For instance, we call the Moslems chaste because they abstained from indiscriminate profligacy, and kept carefully within the bounds prescribed as licit by their prophet. But those bounds, besides the utmost freedom of divorce and change of *wives*, admitted an illimitable license of cohabitation with "all that the right hand of the believer might possess," or in other words, with any possible number of damsels he might choose to purchase, to receive in gift, or take captive in war.

Facility of Divorce.

The facility of divorce at this period, (when even the easy check of three intervening months before the re-marriage of the divorced female was not imposed,) may be illustrated by the following incident. Abd al Rahmân, son of Awf, on his first reaching Medina, was lodged by Sád son of Rabí, a Medina convert to whom Mahomet had united him in brotherhood.* As they sat at meat Sád thus addressed his guest:—"My brother! I have abundance of wealth; I will divide with thee a portion thereof. And behold my two wives! Choose which of them thou likest best, and I will divorce her that thou mayest take her to thyself to wife." And Abd al Rahmân replied:—"The

* This refers to the arrangement made by Mahomet on his first reaching Medina, according to which each emigrant was specially joined in close brotherhood with some one of the Medina converts.

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Lord bless thee, my brother, in thy family and in thy property!" So he married one of the wives of Sád."

Comparison of the life of Mahomet to his emigration, with the life of Christ.

At the opening scene of the prophetical life of Mahomet, we ventured to fetch an illustration of his position from the temptation of our Saviour.† The parallel between the founders of Christianity and Islam might be continued to the Flight of Mahomet, but there it must stop; for it is the only point at all corresponding with the close of Christ's ministry. Beyond that term in the life of Rule, of Rapine, and Indulgence, led by Mahomet at Medina, there is absolutely no feature whatever in common with the life of Jesus.

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* After this brotherly mark of affection, Abd al Rahmán said,—"My brother take me on the morrow to the market place." So they went, and Abd al Rahmán traded, and returned with a bag of butter and cheese which he had acquired by the traffic. Mahomet met him in one of the streets of Medina with the saffron clothes of nuptial attire upon him, and he said, "How is this?" And Abd al Rahmán replied, "I have married me a wife from amongst the people of Medina." "For what dower?" "For a piece of gold of the size of a date stone." "And why," replied Mahomet, "not with a goat?" *Kitáb al Wáckidi*, pp. 202, 203, 282.

The above is intended by the traditionists to illustrate the *poverty* of Abd al Rahmán when he reached Medina, as contrasted with the vast wealth subsequently amassed by him. "At his death he left gold in such quantities, that it was cut with hatchets till the people's hands bled." He had 1,000 camels, 3,000 sheep, and 100 horses. He had issue by *sixteen* wives, besides children by concubines. One of the former was Tamádhir, the daughter of a Christian chieftain, whom he married at Mahomet's bidding, and who bore to him Abdallah (Abu Salma) the famous traditionist. As one of his four widows, she inherited 1,00,000 dinars.

Abd al Rahmán was penurious. Mahomet said to him "O son of Awf! Verily thou art amongst the rich, and thou shalt not enter Paradise but with great difficulty. Lend therefore to thy Lord, so that He may loosen thy steps." And he departed by Mahomet's advice to give away all his property. But the prophet sent for him again, and told him by Gabriel's desire that it would suffice if he used hospitality and gave alms.

It will be a curious and useful task to trace the tendencies of the new Faith to indulgence, as shown by the multitude of wives and concubines, and the vast wealth of the chief leaders of early Islám. These forcibly illustrate its gross and earthly spirit even in its best days, and when closest to the fountain head.

† See close of chapter III. p. 91.

Apparent effect produced by Mahomet greater.

During the periods thus indicated as possible for comparison, persecution and rejection were the fate of both. But the thirteen years' ministry of Mahomet had brought about a far greater change to the external eye, than the whole lifetime of Christ. The apostles fled at the first sound of danger; and, however deep the inner work may have been in the 500 by whom our Lord was seen, it had produced as yet but little outward action. There was amongst them no spontaneous quitting of their homes, nor emigration by hundreds, such as distinguished the early Moslems; nor any rapturous resolution by the converts of a foreign city to defend the prophet with their blood.

But the comparison to be equal should commence from the day of Pentecost.

This is mainly owing to the fact that Christianity did not, as a fully developed system, begin to assert its claims till after the personal ministry of Christ had ceased. His life was in fact its preparation, his death its key-stone. Islam, on the contrary, formed a complete and an aggressive Faith from the date of the assumption by Mahomet of his public ministry. To make the comparison, therefore, equal between the early effects of Christianity and of Islam, the outpouring of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost must be reckoned as parallel with the beginning of the ministry of Mahomet. And, in this view, Christianity will not yield to Islam in the rapidity of its first spread, or in the devotion of its early followers.

The condition of the Jews also widely different from that of the Arabs.

But confining, for the moment, our comparison to the lives of Jesus and of Mahomet, advertence must be had to the different state of the two people among whom respectively they ministered:—Jesus amongst the Jews, whose law he came not to destroy but to fulfil, and in whose *outer* life therefore there was no marked change to be effected:—Mahomet amongst a nation of idolators sunk in darkness and vice, whose whole system must be overturned, and from the midst of whom converts, to exhibit any consistency whatever, must go forth with a bold and distinctive separation.

The system of Jesus spiritual, and exclusive of worldly means.

There was, too, a material difference of aim and teaching. The spiritual system of Jesus was essentially incompatible with worldly means and motives. His people, *as such*, though in the world, were to be not "of the world." At every step, he checked

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the Jewish notion of an earthly Messiah's reign. That his followers should have made him a king, or the citizens of another country been invited to receive him and support his cause by arms, would have been at direct variance with the whole spirit and principles of Jesus. It was this spirituality of aim and agency, to the entire exclusion of earthly aids, that chiefly tended to produce the difference in apparent progress.

Material inducements sought after by Mahomet.

The principles of Mahomet were utterly diverse. His reason for the toleration of his Meccan opponents was present weakness only. While patience for *awhile* was inculcated by God on Mahomet and his followers, the future all breathed of revenge and victory. It is true that, in the Coran, the instruments as yet lay hid,—known to God alone. But not the less were the enemies of the prophet to be overthrown and perish; and that with a *material* destruction, like the Flood, and the flames of Sodom and Gomorrha. Human agency was moreover diligently sought after. The tribes as they came up to the yearly solemnities of Mecca, were one by one canvassed and exhorted to rally round "the cause of God and His prophet;" the chiefs of Tayif were tempted by the prospect of sovereignty over the rival City and Temple; and, at last, when all nearer aid was despaired of, the converts of Medina were bound by an oath of fealty to defend the Prophet with the same weapons and the same devotion as they did their wives and children.

Prospect of a warlike struggle.

It was easy to be foreseen that, on the first rise of opposition, arms and warfare, with all the attractive accompaniments of revenge and predatory raids, would decide the struggle. And the prospect of this had, even before the Hegira, a marvellous effect upon the plunder-loving Arabs.

The sword of Islam contrasted with the expedients of early Christianity.

It was, I believe, with the full anticipation of such a struggle (for he was not long at Medina before taking the initiative,) that Mahomet, alarmed by the council of the Coreish, hid himself in the cave, and fled from Mecca. Compare with this, if indeed there be any common ground of comparison, the peaceful and sublime serenity with which Jesus calmly awaited the diabolical machinations of the Jewish council. And contrast with the sword about to be unsheathed by Mahomet, the grand principle

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for the propagation of his faith pronounced by Jesus before his heathen judge:—"My kingdom is not of this world; if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is My kingdom not from hence." Jesus was "from above," and used heavenly weapons; Mahomet, "of the earth," and leaned upon earthly means. Islam is human; Christianity, divine.

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CHAPTER SEVENTH.

*The relation of Islam to Christianity.**

Up to B.H. 3, little allusion to Christianity

At the close of the fifth chapter, it has been stated that up to about the tenth year of the Mission of Mahomet there is hardly any mention in the Coran of Christianity or the Christian Scriptures.

Subject of the Chapter; relation of Islâm to Christianity.

In the Suras of the period reviewed in the preceding chapter, that is in the three last years of the Prophet's residence at Mecca, we begin to find detailed notices on the subject. Indeed, the approach then made by Mahomet to our holy Faith never afterwards became closer; nor did his views of it materially alter. It will not, therefore, be inappropriate here to review the entire relation of Islam to Christianity; and, in so doing, I shall not confine the enquiry to the Meccan period, but extend it to the whole of the Prophet's life.

Notices of Christianity few and scattered.

Though the Christians and their Prophet are frequently referred to in the Coran by name, yet

* In this chapter I have availed myself largely of the learned and interesting work by Gerock;—*Versuch einer Darstellung der Christologie des Koran. Hamburg und Gotha*, 1839.

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extended notices of the narrative or doctrines of the Gospel are few, and scattered;—so few, indeed, that it will be possible (and I doubt not it will prove interesting,) to enumerate them all.

Earliest and fullest account of the Gospel History.

The following, which is the fullest and the earliest, account of the Gospel history, was produced by Mahomet shortly after his journey to Tâyif. From its subject the Sura is entitled MARY (Maryam), and opens thus;—

A Commemoration of the mercy of the Lord unto His servant ZACHARIAS;—
When he called upon his Lord with a secret invocation.
He said:—Oh Lord! as for me, my bones are decrepit, and my head white with hoar hair
And I have never prayed unto Thee, Oh Lord! unheard.
Verily, I fear my kinsmen after me; and my Wife is barren.
Wherefore grant unto me from thyself a successor;*

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* ولى—Successor. In the parallel passage in Sura iii. 38, the expression used is ذرية or *offspring*. Gerock would construe the passage as the prayer of Zacharias for an heir generally; and not from his own body, of which from the opening of his prayer it seems he had no expectation. He goes so far as to say that the prayer alludes probably to the marriage of Mary "his ward," or "foster-daughter," (Pflegetochter), whose child Gerock assumes (but seemingly on very insufficient grounds) would be the heir of Zacharias. *Christologie*, p. 20. I very much doubt this explanation, and would take the common sense of ذرية—*i. e.* "offspring to Zacharias himself." It is true that this involves an apparent contradiction; but the Coran is not remarkable for its consistency, and the Mussulman commentators themselves do not stand on this difficulty. Abd ul Câdir, the Urdu translator of the Coran, holds that Zacharias prayed "in secret," because, at his advanced age, to have prayed *openly* for offspring would have subjected him to ridicule!

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Who shall be my heir, and an heir of the Family of Jacob; and make him, Oh Lord! well pleasing.

Oh ZACHARIAS! WE bring thee good tidings of a son, whose name shall be JOHN;

We have not made any to be called thereby before.*

He said;—Oh Lord! whence shall there be a son unto me, since my Wife is barren, and I truly have reached the imbecility of old age?

He said;—So shall it be. Thus saith thy Lord,—It is easy unto me; for verily I created thee heretofore when thou wast nothing.

He said;—Lord! make unto me a sign. He said;—This is thy sign; thou shalt not speak unto any for three nights,† though sound in health.

And he went forth unto his people from the chamber, and he motioned unto them that they should praise God in the morning and evening.

Oh JOHN! Take the Book‡ with power; and WE gave Him Wisdom, as a child,

And compassion from Us, and Purity; and he was virtuous, and dutiful unto his parents: he was not overbearing nor rebellious.

Peace be on him the day he was born, and the day he shall die, and the day he shall be raised to life!

And make mention, in the Book,§ of MARY, when she withdrew from her people into an eastern place;

And took a curtain withal, to hide herself from them.

And WE sent unto her Our SPIRIT, and he appeared unto her a perfect man.

She said;—I seek refuge in the Merciful from thee, if thou fearest God!

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* Evidently based on *Luke* i. 61.

† Compare *Sura* iii. 41. In the Gospel, *Luke* i. 20. 64. the dumbness continues until after the birth of John.

‡ That is the Book of the Old Testament. The verse is supposed to be spoken by God Himself.

§ *i.e.* in the Coran.

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He said:—Nay, verily, but I am a messenger of thy Lord, that I may give unto thee a virtuous son.*

She said:—How shall there be to me a son, and a man hath not touched me, and I am not unchaste.

He said:—So shall it be. Thus said thy Lord;—It is easy with Me: and WE shall make him a sign unto mankind, and a mercy from us, for it is a thing decreed.

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* Gerock (p. 37), with much special pleading, endeavours to prove Mahomet's doctrine to have been that Gabriel was the father of Jesus by ordinary generation. The only expression which gives the shadow of a colour to this idea is the one in the text, where Gabriel declares himself sent,—"that *I may give* thee a virtuous Son." But from the parallel passage (*Sura* iii. 45) it clearly appears that no stress can be laid upon these words. The following is the account there given: "When the Angels said, *Oh* MARY! *Verily God giveth thee good tidings of the* WORD *from Him*, JESUS, *the Messiah, the Son of Mary, &c.* She said: Whence shall there be a son unto me, and no man hath touched me? He said,—Thus doth God create that which He pleaseth; when He hath decreed a thing, He only saith unto it, BE, and it shall be," &c.

Besides, in both passages, after the annunciation by Gabriel, the question of Mary as to how this should be, seeing that "she knew not a man" (Luke i. 34), and the reply of Gabriel that it would be by the Almighty power of God, are conclusive against any such meaning as that started by Gerock; and show that Mahomet simply adopted the Gospel story as it was narrated to him, even to verbal coincidence.

It is farther clear from the phrases repeatedly applied in the Coran to Mary, as "she *whose virginity we preserved*, and into whom WE breathed of Our Spirit," that Mahomet avowed the immaculate and supernatural conception of Jesus. *Sura* xxi. 91; and lxvi. 13; the former revealed at Mecca, the latter at Medina.

The expression والتي احصنت فرجها, which it is not necessary to translate literally, will satisfy the Arabic scholar, that Gerock's theory is utterly groundless.

And she conceived him, and withdrew with him (*in the womb*) unto a distant place.

And the pains of labour came upon her by the trunk of a palm tree;

She said,—Would (how I had died before this, and been forgotten, out of mind!*

And there cried one from below her;—Grieve not thou! verily thy Lord hath provided beneath thee a fountain:—

And shake unto thee the root of the Palm tree; it will drop upon thee ripe dates, ready plucked.

Wherefore eat and drink, and be comforted; and if thou seest any man,

Say,—Verily I have vowed unto the Merciful a fast, and I will not speak to any man this day.

And she came with the child unto her people, carrying him; they said,—Oh Mary! Verily thou hast done a strange thing:

Oh Sister of Aaron!† thy father was not an evil man, nor was thy mother unchaste.

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* Gerock (p. 37), as it appears to me quite gratuitously, turns these words of natural anguish into a proof of his doctrine as to the paternity of Jesus.

† In *Sura* iii. 33, she is likewise called *the daughter* of IMRÂN: and it is therefore concluded by some that Mahomet confounded Mary (Maryam) with the sister of Moses. The confusion of names is the more suspicious, as it is not favoured by Christian authority of any description,—the traditional names of Mary's parents being Joachim and Anna.

Gerock combats this idea at some length (p. 21), showing that Imrân is never named in the Coran as the father of Moses, nor Mary (Maryam) as his sister, and that Mahomet is seen elsewhere to be well aware of the interval between Jesus and Moses. The latter fact cannot, of course, be doubted. Mahomet could never have imagined that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was the sister of Moses and Aaron. But it is still extremely probable that the confusion of this mis-nomenclature originated in the notions of

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And she pointed to the child. They said;—*How shall we speak with him that is an infant in the cradle?* *

He (*the child*) said:—Verily I am the servant of God; He hath given me the Book, and made me a Prophet;

And made me blessed wheresoever I may be, and hath commanded me (*to observe*) Prayer and Almsgiving while I remain alive;

And made me dutiful to my mother, and not overbearing nor wretched:—

Peace be on me the day I was born, and the day I shall die, and the day I shall be raised alive!

This is JESUS, the Word of truth,† concerning whom they are in doubt.

It is not for God to take *unto* Him a Son:—Glory be to Him! When He hath decreed a matter, He only saith *unto* it, BE, and it shall be.‡

One other detailed

There is but one other detailed account of the

Jewish informants, amongst whom the only notorious Mary (Maryam) was the daughter of Imrân, and sister of Moses; and they would ordinarily give the name of *Maryam* those accompaniments; that is, they would speak of "Mary the daughter of Imrân." Mahomet adopted the phraseology (for his informants were mainly, if not solely, Jews,) probably through inadvertence and without perceiving the anachronism it involved.

* The tradition that Jesus spoke in his cradle is referred to in the *Gospel of the Infancy*, chap. i. "Invenimus in libro Josephi Pontificis, qui vixit tempore Christi, Jesum locutum esse, et quidem cum in cunis jaceret, dixisseque matri suae Mariae: Ego, quem peperisti, sum Jesus filius Dei, verbum, quem admodum annunciavit tibi angelus Gabriel, misitque me pater meus ad salutem mundi." See *Gerock*, p. 47.

† "The Word of Truth concerning whom;" or, "*A true saying, concerning which*," &c. The original,—قول الحق—is susceptible of both constructions.

‡ *Sura* xix. vv. 1-33

birth of Jesus in the Coran;* and that was delivered a few years before the death of Mahomet, on the occasion of an embassy to Medina from the Christian tribe of Najrân, the singular particulars of which will be allude to below. account of Christ's birth.

Of the *Life* of Christ, the statements are unaccountably meagre, and mingled with fable. It is remarkable that the passages in which they occur belong solely to the prophet's later years at Medina. Statements regarding the Life of Christ.

The object of the Mission of Jesus to the Jews was to confirm their Scriptures, to modify and lighten some of the burdens of their Law, and to recall them to the true service of God.† His miracles are thus described:—

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* *Sura* iii. 33-54. This passage contains in much detail the birth of Mary, and Gerock has traced in it some approximations to the Apocryphal Gospels.

1. Mary's parents devoted her while in the womb to the Divine service, *Sura* iii. 35;—compared with *Evang. de Nativ. Mariae*:—"Voverunt tamen (ejus parentes) si forte Deus donaret eis sobolem, eam se Domini servitio mancipaturos." 2. God supplied her supernaturally with daily food; *Cf. Protev. Jacob*, ch. 8,—και ἔλαβανε τροφην ἐκ χειρος ἀγγέλου. So, *Hist. Nativ. Mar. et infant. Salv.*;—quotidie esa, quam de manu angeli accipiebat, &c. 3. The relatives of Mary cast arrows (lots) for her charge, *Sura* iii. 44; compared with *Ev. Nativ. Mar.* cap. 6-8; *Protev. Jacob.* cap. 8-9. *Gerock*, p. 30.

I have rejected below the notion that Mahomet had access to the Apocryphal Gospels. But the coincidences here noticed point to something common between those Gospels and the source whence Mahomet derived his information. The source was, I believe, the common tradition of southern Syria; and the Apocryphal Gospels probably embodied much of the same tradition.

† *Sura* iii. 49.

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On a certain day shall God assemble His messengers, and say;—What reply was made unto you? They shall say;—We know not, verily Thou art the Knower of secrets.

Then shall God say;—Oh JESUS! Son of MARY! call to mind My grace upon thee and upon thy MOTHER, when I strengthened thee with the HOLY SPIRIT, that thou shouldest speak with men in the cradle, and in mature life;—and when I taught thee the Scripture and Wisdom, and the Law, and the Gospel;—and when thou formedst of clay like unto the figure of a Bird by my permission, and thou blewest thereupon and it became a Bird by my permission;—and thou didst heal the Blind and the Leper by my permission;—and when thou didst raise the Dead by my permission;* and when I held back the Children of Israel from thee at the time thou showedst unto them evident signs, and the Unbelievers among them said,—Verily this is nought but manifest sorcery.

And remember when I spake by inspiration to the Apostles,† saying,—Believe on Me, and on My Apostle. They said,—We believe; bear thou witness that we are Moslems.‡

When the Apostles said,—Oh JESUS, Son of MARY! is thy Lord able to cause a Table to descend upon us from Heaven? He said,—Fear God; if ye be faithful. They said,—We desire that we may eat therefrom, and that our hearts be set at ease, and that we may know that thou verily hast spoken unto us the truth, and that we may be witnesses thereof. Then spake JESUS, Son of MARY,—Oh God, our Lord! send down unto us a Table from Heaven, that it may be unto us a Feast day,§ unto the first of us and unto the last of us, and a sign from Thee; and nourish us, for Thou art the best of Nourishers. And God said,—Verily

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* These miracles are again recapitulated in *Sura* iii. 48, with this addition;—"And I will tell unto you what ye eat, and what ye store in your houses," *i.e.* as a proof of his knowledge of the invisible.

† الحواريين used only of the Apostles *of Jesus*.

‡ *i.e.* those who have surrendered themselves unto God.

§ عيد An Eed, or religious festival recurring periodically.

I will send it down unto you; and whoever after that shall disbelieve amongst you: surely I will torment him with a torment wherewith I shall not torment any other creature.

And when God shall say,—Oh Jesus, Son of Mary! didst Thou speak unto mankind saying,—Take me and my mother for two Gods besides the Lord? He shall say,—Glory be to Thee! it is not for me to say that which I know to be not the truth. If I had said that, verily Thou wouldest have known it. Thou knowest that which is in me, but I know not that which is in Thee; verily, Thou art the Knower of secrets. I spake not unto them aught but what Thou commandest me, saying,—Worship God, my Lord and your Lord. And I was a witness unto them whilst I continued amongst them; and, since Thou hast taken me away, Thou hast Thyself been their keeper, and Thou art a Witness over all things. If Thou punish them, verily they are Thy servants, and if Thou have mercy upon them, verily Thou art the Glorious, the Wise!

God will answer,—This is a day on which their truthfulness shall profit the truthful. They shall have Gardens with rivulets flowing through them, and remain therein for ever. God is well-pleased with them, and they well-pleased with Him. That shall be a great Felicity!*

This passage is remarkable as affording in the supernatural table that descended from heaven, a possible allusion,—the only one traceable in the Coran,—to the Lord's Supper. The tale is probably founded on some misapprehended tradition regarding "the *Table* of the Lord."† Allusion to the Lord's Supper.

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* *Sura* v. 118 to end.

† The prolific fancy of the Traditionists and Commentators has created a host of miraculous accompaniments to this table;—Fruit from the trees of Paradise; Bread; Meats; and Fish, which, though broiled, were still alive, and for the convenience of the guests threw off their scales and bones!

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Jesus not crucified, but raised to Heaven.

To complete the miserably deficient and garbled outline, it remains only to be added that Jesus escaped the machinations of the Jews, and was taken up alive to heaven. In a passage aimed at his Jewish enemies of Medina, Mahomet thus upbraids their rebellious forefathers:—

—— And for their Unbelief; and for their *having spoken* against Mary a grevious calumny: and for their saying,—*Verily we have killed the* MESSIAH, JESUS, son of MARY, the Apostle of God. And they killed him not, neither did they crucify him, but he was simulated (in the person of another) unto them. And verily they that are at variance about him, are in doubt concerning him. They have no knowledge regarding him, but follow only a conjecture. And they slew him not, certainly. But God raised him up unto Himself; and God is the GLORIOUS, the WISE! And there is none of the People of the Book but shall believe in him before his death, and in the day of Judgment he will be a Witness against them.*

The Meccans object that Jesus was worshipped; and why not their Deities also.

In addressing the idolatrous Meccans, Mahomet appealed to the Ministry and Revelations of Jesus, and his rejection by his people, as he was wont to appeal to the history of other Prophets, for an analogy to his own case, and in support of his Mission. His adversaries saw their opportunity and replied that, if

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The poor, the lame, and the wretched, were invited to the feast, which lasted forty days. The commentators probably confounded the Lord's Supper with the feeding by Jesus of the multitudes.

* *Sura* iv. 155-158. "The people of the Book," *i.e.* Jews as well as Christians. The purport of this last verse is obscure. It probably implies that the death of Christ will take place before the Judgment Day; and that the Jews will then be forced to believe in Him.

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Jesus, who appeared in human form, was worshipped by his followers, there could be nothing absurd (as he would insist) in their praying through images,—the representatives of heavenly powers,—to God. They exclaimed with delight that thus his whole argument fell to the ground;—

> And when JESUS, Son of MARY, was proposed as an example, lo, thy people cried aloud,
> And they said, What! Are our own Gods the best, or he?
> They have proposed this unto thee only as a cause of dispute;
> Yea, they are a contentious people!
> Verily he was no other than a servant, to whom WE were gracious, and WE made him an example unto the Children of Israel:—
> (And if WE pleased WE could make from amongst yourselves Angels to succeed you upon earth:)
> And verily he shall be for a sign of the last hour. Wherefore doubt not thereof, and follow me; this the right way.
> And let not Satan obstruct you, for he is your manifest Enemy.*

Mahomet replies that Jesus was but a Servant.

This was in fact the only position which, at the present advanced period of his Mission, Mahomet could consistently fall back upon; and it was ever after carefully maintained. Some terms of veneration, in use among Christians, are indeed applied to Jesus, as "the WORD of God," and "His SPIRIT which he breathed into Mary."† But the Divine

He denies the divine Sonship of Jesus; and the Trinity.

* *Sura* xliii. 56-60.

† So *Sura* iv. 169. "His WORD, which He placed in Mary, and a SPIRIT from Him." John was to bear testimony to "the WORD from God," *Sura* iii. 39. At the annunciation, the Virgin is thus addressed;—"Oh Mary! God giveth thee good tidings of THE WORD from Himself,—the Messiah, Jesus," &c. *Sura* iii. 40. "WE breathed into her of OUR SPIRIT," lxvi. 13; xxi. 91.

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Sonship was stedfastly denied. The worship of Jesus by the Christians was placed in the same category as the supposed worship of Ezra by the Jews;* and, in one place, the doctrine of the Trinity is expressly reprobated. It is a Medina Sura;—

> Ye People of the Book! Commit not extravagancies in your religion; and speak not of God aught but the truth. For verily the Messiah, JESUS, Son of MARY, is an apostle of God, and His WORD which he placed in Mary, and a SPIRIT from Him. Wherefore believe in God, and in the Apostles; and say not, THREE. Refrain: it will be well for you. Verily the Lord is one God. Glory be to Him! far be it from Him, that there should be to Him a Son. To Him belongeth whatsoever is in the Heavens and in the Earth; and He is a sufficient Patron. The Messiah disdaineth not to be a Servant of God: neither the Cherubim that draw nigh unto Him.†

Mahomet's Sources of Christian information imperfect and deceptive.

It may well be doubted whether Mahomet ever understood the real doctrines of Christianity. The few passing observations regarding our Faith to be found in the Coran, commence at a period when his system was already, in great part, matured; and they seem founded upon information not only deficient but deceptive. The whole of his historical knowledge‡ (for whatever he knew it was his

* *Sura* ix. 31.

† *Sura* iv. 169-170.

‡ The only trace of acquaintance with the period subsequent to the ascension, and the spread of Christianity, is the story of the three Apostles (one of whom is supposed to have been Simon Peter,) who went to Antioch, and of one of their converts there who suffered martyrdom. *Sura* xxxvi. 13-28.

The story of the seven Sleepers, who slumbered 309 years, and then arose to find the idolatrous world Christianized, can hardly

practice to embody in his Revelation,) is contained in the few extracts already before the reader; and, whether regarded in its own meagre and apocryphal outlines, or compared with the ample details transcribed in the Coran of Jewish history both Scriptural and Traditional, shows that his sources of Christian information were singularly barren and defective. The Sacrament of Baptism is not even alluded to; and, if there be an allusion to the Eucharist, we have seen it to be utterly disfigured and well nigh lost in fable. The great doctrine of Redemption through the death of Christ was apparently unknown (for if it had been known and rejected, it would no doubt have been combated in the Coran,) and His very Crucifixion denied.

Christianity had little real influence in Islam.

We do not find a single ceremony or doctrine of Islam in the smallest degree moulded, or even tinged, by the peculiar tenets of Christianity.—While Judaism, on the contrary, has given its colour to the whole system, and lent to it the shape and type, if not the actual substance, of many ordinances.

Yet theoretically it stood equal if not superior to Judaism.

But although Christianity is thus so remote from Islam as to have had practically no influence in the formation of its creed and ritual, yet, in the

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be classed under this head, though it shows the interest Mahomet was beginning to take in Christians. It will be found, with abundance of childish romance and fiction, in *Sura* xviii.

Both Suras belong to the late Meccan period.

theory of Mahomet's system, it occupies a place equal, if not superior, to that of Judaism. To understand this we must take a brief review of the development of the system itself.

Growth of Mahomet's teaching in this respect traced.

In his first breathings of pseudo-inspiration, the Prophet professed no distinct relation with any previous religion, excepting perhaps with the purer element in the national worship said to have been derived from Abraham, though grievously overlaid with idolatry and superstition. His Mission was simply to recall the Arabs to the service of the true God, and a belief in "the day of Reckoning."

Coran at first held to be concurrent with and only auxiliary of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures.

In process of time, he gained, through (as I believe) Jewish informants, some acquaintance with the existing Scriptures of the Jews and Christians, and the systems founded on them. The new Revelation was now announced as concurrent with the previous "Books." The Coran was described mainly as an attestation, in the Arabic tongue, and for the people of Mecca and its neighbourhood, of the preceding Scriptures. It was purely auxiliary in its object, and local in its action. From the attacks of the idolaters, Mahomet sheltered himself behind the character and authority of those Scriptures, admitted in some measure even by the Meccans. When his work was abused as a "Forgery" and an "antiquated Tale," the most common and the most effective retort was;—"Nay, but it is a confirmation of the preceding Revelation, and a warning in simple

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Arabic to the people of this land." The number, and the solemnity of such asseverations secured the confidence, or at least neutrality, of the Jews and Christians.*

It gradually acquires a superior and superseding character;

But the system of Mahomet could not stop at this point. Was he not an Apostle, equally inspired with his predecessors? Was he not foretold, as the prophet that should arise, by Moses in the Pentateuch, and in the Gospel by Jesus? If he was, in truth, the last of the Apostles, would not his moulding of the true faith remain permanent to the end of time? These conclusions were fast ripening in the mind of Mahomet; and their effect was to make the Coran rise superior in authority over both the Old and the New Testament.

as the latest revelation of God's will.

Not that it was ever held to be superior *in kind* to either. All three are spoken of as "the Word of God," and the belief in them equally inculcated on pain of hell fire.† But the Coran was the

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* See *Suras* xlvi. 8-12, 30; vi. 93-156; xxxvi. 6; xii. 11. There are many other similar passages.

† The New Testament is spoken of in the Coran under the sole title of *Injil* (Evangelium) Gospel: and it is described as *given by God to Jesus*. Hence Gerock would conclude that Mahomet did *not intend* the Gospel in common use among Christians, which was revealed *after* the ascension of Jesus; but some other Gospel (p. 91).

The question, however, is not what might be deduced from a systematic and close construction of the expressions of a man grossly ignorant on the subject, but what was his fairly inferrible meaning. And in this view it is evident from the whole tenor

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latest revelation; and, in so far as it pleased the Almighty to modify his preceding commands, it was paramount.

Two stages. *First*, the Old Testament and the Gospel permitted to, and enjoined upon, the Jews and Christians respectively.

In this latter phase again there are two stages. Mahomet did not at once substitute the Coran in supersession of the previous Scriptures. The Jew was still to follow the Law; he was to believe also in the New Testament and in the mission of Jesus. The Christian, too, was to hold fast by his Gospel. But both Jew and Christian were to admit, as co-ordinate with their own Prophets and Scriptures, the Apostleship of Mahomet and the authority of the Coran. The necessity, indeed, of conforming to their respective Revelations, is urged upon them in the strongest terms. The Jews of Medina are repeatedly summoned "to judge by the Book," that is by the Old Testament; and they are warned against the danger of accepting a part only of God's word, and rejecting a part. The following passages inculcate a similar duty on both Jews and Christians: —

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of the Coran, that by "the Gospel" Mahomet meant the sacred Scriptures in common and universal use amongst the Christians of his day. His ignorance may have led him to suppose that those Scriptures were revealed to Jesus: or he may perhaps have intended only that the principles and doctrines of the Gospel were revealed by God to Jesus, and by Him taught to the Apostles who recorded them. However this may be, the clear fact is in no-wise affected, that Mahomet, by the term Gospel, referred to the received Canon of Scripture as then current among Christians

SAY, Oh ye people of the Book! ye do not stand upon any sure ground until ye set up both the Law* and the Gospel, as well as that which hath been sent down unto you from your Lord.† * *

And how will they (the Jews of Medîna) make thee their judge, since they have already by them the Towrât, wherein is the command of God, and have not obeyed it! They will surely turn their backs after that; and they are not Believers.

Verily WE have sent down the Old Testament, wherein are a Direction and a Light. The Prophets that submitted themselves to God judged thereby the Jews: and the Doctors and Priests did likewise, in accordance with that portion of the Book of God, which WE committed to their charge; and they were witnesses thereof. Wherefore fear not men, but fear ME; and sell not the Signs of God for a small price. AND WHOSOEVER DOTH NOT JUDGE BY THAT WHICH GOD HATH REVEALED, VERILY THEY ARE THE UNBELIEVERS.‡ And WE have written therein for them;—Verily life for life, and eye for eye, and nose for nose, and ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and for wounding retaliation: and he that remitteth the same as alms, it is an atonement for him. AND HE WHO JUDGETH NOT BY THAT WHICH GOD HATH REVEALED, THEY ARE THE TRANSGRESSORS.§

And WE caused JESUS, the Son of MARY, to follow in their footsteps, attesting the Scripture, viz., the Towrât which preceded him. And WE gave him the Gospel wherein is Guidance and Light, attesting the Towrât which preceded it, a Direction and an Admonition to the pious:—and that the people of the Gospel (Christians,) may judge according to that which God hath revealed therein. AND WHOSOEVER DOTH NOT JUDGE ACCORDING TO THAT WHICH GOD HATH REVEALED, THEY ARE THE WICKED ONES.‖

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* التوراة the Towrât. As used in the Coran, this word sometimes signifies the Pentateuch only, sometimes the entire Scriptures of the Old Testament held by the Jews. According to the context of this and the following passages, the latter meaning is intended.

† *i.e.* the Coran. *Sura* v. 68.

‡ الكافرون

§ الظالمون

‖ الفاسقون

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And WE have revealed to thee the Book* in truth, attesting the Scripture which preceded it, and a custodian (*or* witness) thereof. Wherefore judge between them in accordance with what God hath revealed, and follow not their vain desires away from that which hath been given unto thee.

To every one have WE given a Law and a Way. And if God had pleased, He had made you all one People. But (*He hath done otherwise*) that He might try you in that which He hath severally given unto you. Wherefore press forward in good works. Unto God shall ye all return, and He will tell you that concerning which ye disagree.

Judge therefore between them according to that which God hath revealed, and follow not their desires, and beware of them lest they tempt thee aside from a part of that which God hath revealed unto thee.†

Thus the former revelations were to be believed in collectively as the Word of God by all the faithful of whatever sect; and the Old and New Testaments were further to be each directly used and implicity observed by the Jews and Christians respectively as their guide and director, and by Mahomet himself in judging their internal disputes. In contested and doubtful points, the Coran was to be admitted by all mankind as a conclusive oracle.

The grand Catholic Faith;—the faith of Abraham.

In conformity with this expansive system, we find that, at a period long anterior to the Hegira, Mahomet propounded in the Coran the doctrine that a grand Catholic faith pervaded all ages and revelations;‡—a faith which, in its purest form, had

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* *i.e.* the Coran. † *Sura* v. 50-57.

‡ See *Sura* xvi. 120-123. Connected with this Catholic faith is the doctrine that a prophet has been sent to every people. *Sura* xxviii. 60; xxii. 36, 57.

been held by the patriarch Abraham. This primitive religion, varied at each dispensation by accidental rites, comprised, as its essential features, belief in the One true God, rejection of all idolatry or worship of Mediators as sharers in the power and glory of the Deity, and the implicit surrender of the will to God. Such surrender is termed "Islam;" and hence Abraham is called "the first of Moslems." To this original Islam it was now the mission of Mahomet to recall *the whole of Mankind*.

Perverted in the course of ages.

Each successive Revelation had been abused by its votaries, who had quickly turned aside from the pure elements forming the ground work of the dispensation. They had magnified or misinterpreted rites intended to be only ancillary and external. By perverting doctrines, they had turned the gift of Revelation into a curse. They had fallen into a thousand sects, "each rejoicing in its own opinions," and fencing itself round with intolerance and intense hatred.

Mahomet the final Restorer.

Amidst the contending factions, truth might possibly be discovered by the earnest enquirer, but it would be by difficult and uncertain steps. The Jew denounced the Christian, and the Christian the Jew. Some worshipped not only Jesus but his mother also; others held both to be mere creatures. From this labyrinth of confusion and error it pleased the Almighty once again to deliver mankind. Mahomet was the Apostle of this grand and final

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Mission, and his judgment was to be heard unquestioned amid the clash of opposing authorities. Thus in a Meccan Sura;—

He hath ordained unto you the Faith which He commanded unto Noah; and which We have revealed unto thee, and which We commanded unto Abraham and Moses and Jesus; saying, Set up the Faith and fall not into dissension.

And they fell not into dissension until after the knowledge (of Divine Revelation) had come unto them,* out of enmity among themselves; and if the Word from thy Lord had not gone forth (respiting them) unto a fixed time, the matter had been decided between them. And verily they that have inherited the Book after them are in a perplexing doubt regarding the same.

Wherefore call them thereto (*i.e.* unto the Catholic Faith) and be stedfast as thou hast been commanded, and follow not their desires; and say,—I believe in all the Scriptures which God hath revealed; and I am commanded to do justice between you. God is our Lord and your Lord. To us will be reckoned our works, and to you your works.† There is no ground of difference‡ between us and you.§

Salvation not confined to Islâm.

In this intermediate stage, Salvation was not confined to Islam, but would be obtained by every

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* This is a favourite idea repeated frequently in the Coran, as in *Sura* ii. 254. The commentators are inclined to explain it of Islam, viz., that Jews and Christians did not fall away *till Mahomet came*, when they denied the prophet they had been expecting. But the idea seems to point rather to the misuse of former Revelations which, instead of leading men to the true faith broke them up into opposing sects.

† That is,—"your good works will not be vain and rejected as those of the Idolators, but will be reckoned towards Salvation, equally with those of my own followers."

‡ حجة "Ground of contention," "quarrel," "dispute."

§ *Sura* xlii. 12-15.

righteous man whatever his religion, provided he abjured idolatry.

In the last period of development, the Coran rides triumphant over both the Law and the Gospel, and casts them unheeded into the shade. This, however, arose not from any express declaration, but from the necessary progress of the system. The popular impression which would attribute to Mahomet either the formal cancelment of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, or any imputation against their perfect genuineness and authority, is entirely mistaken. No expressions regarding them ever escaped the lips of Mahomet, but those of the most implicit reverence and highest eulogy.*

Second stage; The Coran tacitly, but entirely supersedes previous revelation;

It was the opposition of the Jews, and the cold suspicion of the Christians, as well as the martial supremacy of Islam over the Hejáz, that imperceptibly, but inevitably, led to the exclusive imposition of the authority of Mahomet and the Coran. The change which dispensed with previous Revelations was made in silence. In the concluding,

which, towards the close of his career, is hardly alluded to.

* See a treatise by the Author entitled, *The Testimony borne by the Coran to the Jewish and Christian Scriptures*, in which every text having any reference whatever to those Scriptures, has been quoted. It is clearly proved by this collection, that the strongest and most unequivocal testimony is borne by the Coran to the Jewish and Christian Scriptures as current in the time of Mahomet; that the evidence extends equally to their genuineness and authority; and that there is not a hint anywhere to be found of their cancelment or interpolation.

as in the early days of his mission, Mahomet hardly ever refers to the former Scriptures. His scheme was complete, and rested now on other pillars. The steps by which he had ascended to his final elevation were left far behind and forgotten.

In its final development Islâm rapidly diverged from the Bible.

Islam, indeed, had in the later years of the prophet, been rapidly diverging from all sympathy with the Bible. An appeal to previous Revelation would now have proved embarrassing: and it seems probable that silence on the subject was in some degree intentional. Whatever effect the doctrines of Christianity, if properly understood, might have had on the mind of Mahomet, when yet enquiring and moulding for itself a creed, it is evident that long before the final settlement of Islam at the last Pilgrimage to Mecca, his system had become hardened into a form of which it was impossible that any new influences could produce material alteration. Argument was not now tolerated. Mahomet was the Prophet of God. His word was Law. Every opposing doctrine must vanish before the Divine command.

Hostile declarations against Jews and Christians.

The exclusive and growingly intolerant position of Islam is sufficiently manifested by the ban issued against the Jews and Christians, as unfit for the sacred rites and holy precincts of the Meccan temple; and by the Divine command to war against them until, in confession of the superiority of Islam, they should consent to the payment of a tribute.

Treaties with Christian Tribes.

It may be interesting to illustrate the practical treatment of Christianity by Mahomet after his acquisition of political power, by the treaties entered into with Christian tribes. The following passage from one of the early biographers relates to the important Christian settlement of Najrân. "The Prophet of the Lord wrote to the Bishop of the Bani Hârith, and the Bishops of Najrân, and their Priests, and all that followed them, and their Monks;—saying, that they should continue in (the possession and practice of) everything small and great, as it then stood, in their churches, their prayers, and their monasteries. The pledge of God and of His prophet was given that no Bishop should be removed from his bishoprick, nor any Monk from his monastery, nor any Priest from his priesthood: that their authority and rights should not be altered, nor any thing whatever which was customary amongst them; so long as they conducted themselves peaceably and uprightly. They shall not be burdened with oppression, neither shall they oppress."*

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* *Kitâb al Wâckidi*, p. 51¼. At p. 56¼ there is another treaty with the Christians of Najrân given in greater detail, and probably subsequent to the above. It is to the following effect:—that Mahomet had commanded them to render tribute of all their fruits, yellow, white, and black (ripe and unripe?), and captives: but that he had generously commuted this for 2000 suits of clothes of the value of an owckea (ounce of silver) each; 1000 to be given annually in the month of Rajab, and 1000 in the month of Safar. Whatever exceeded or fell short of the value of an owckea

Embassy from the Christians of Najrán.

The narrative of the embassy of this people to Medina is in itself curious, and has a double interest from being referred to in the Coran. It is, keeping close to the words of tradition, as follows:*—A deputation of fourteen chief men from Najrán repaired to Mahomet. Among them was Ackil or

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was to come into account; as likewise all armour, horses, camels and other goods taken from them by the Moslems. They were to entertain Mahomet's messengers (collectors) twenty days or less, but not to detain them beyond a month.

When there was war in Yemen they were to lend Mahomet thirty suits of armour, thirty horses, and thirty camels; and any that were lost in the war were to be made good by Mahomet's people.

On the part of Mahomet, the guarantee of the Prophet of the Lord was given for their lives, religion, lands, and property,—of the absent as well as of the present,—and for their churches and places of prayer. No Bishop to be removed from his bishoprick, nor any monk from his monastery, nor any minister, (وَافِدٌ,) from his ministry (وَلَايَةٌ,). Everything, little and great, to remain as it then was. No claim of blood prior to Islam to be allowed. Claims of right to be decided justly. Whoever took interest was free from Mahomet's guarantee.

"Now for all that is written in this paper, there is the protection of God and his Prophet, for ever until the Lord send forth His command (*i.e.* until the day of judgment); if ye deal uprightly and conduct your affairs properly, ye shall not be burdened with injury.' Abu Sofián, and five others, witnesses.

* The statement is given from the Kitáb al Wâckidi. Hishámi, p. 200, has surrounded his version of it with numerous puerile additions in favour of Islam;—such as that their Bishops had with them books inherited from their predecessors and bearing the seal of each successive bishop, in which a notice of Mahomet was found; imaginary conversations between Mahomet and the Christian party to the disconfiture of the latter, &c.

Abd al Masîh, of the Bani Kinda, their chief, Abdal Hârith their bishop, and his brother Kurz their guide. On reaching Medina, they entered the Mosque, and prayed turning towards the east; and they were clothed in fine raiment lined with silk. Then the prophet called them: but when they came, he turned away and would not speak with them. And Othmân told them it was because of their dress. So they departed that day.

In the morning they came again, but this time clothed in their monastic dress, and saluted Mahomet. He returned their salutation, and invited them to Islam, but they refused; and words and disputation increased between them. Then Mahomet recited to them passages from the Coran, and said:—"If ye deny that which I say unto you, *Come let us curse each other.*" They went away to consider the matter. And on the morrow Abd al Masîh, with two of the chief men, came to Mahomet and said;—"We have determined that we shall not curse with thee; wherefore command regarding us whatsoever thou wilt, we will give it; and we will enter into treaty with thee." So he made a treaty with them;* and they returned to their cities. But in the evening Ackil with a companion went back to Mahomet† Mahomet challenges them to curse one the other.

* The particulars of the treaty are similar to those in the previous note.

† *Kitâb al Wâckidi*, p. 69. The subsequent history of the Najrân Christians is there traced. They continued in possession

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professing allegiance to Islam; so they were received and entertained in the house of Abu Ayûb.

The affair described in the Coran.

The incident is thus alluded to in the Coran:—

Verily, the analogy of Jesus is, with God, like unto the analogy of Adam. He created him out of the dust; then He said unto him Be, and he was. This is the truth from thy Lord: wherefore be not thou amongst the doubters.

And whosoever shall dispute with thee therein, after that the true knowledge hath come unto thee; say—*Come let us call out* (the names)* *of our sons and your sons, of our wives and your wives,*

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of their lands and rights under the treaty, during the rest of Mahomet's life and the whole of Abu Bakr's Caliphate. Then they were accused of taking usury, and Omar expelled them from the land, and wrote as follows:—

"The despatch of OMAR, the Commander of the Faithful, to the people of Najrân. Whoever of them emigrates is under the guarantee of God. No Moslem shall injure them;—to fulfil that which Mahomet and Abu Bakr wrote unto them.

"Now to whomsoever of the chiefs of Syria and Irâc they may repair, let such chiefs allot them lands, and whatever they cultivate therefrom shall be theirs; it is an exchange for their own lands. None shall injure or maltreat them: Moslems shall assist them against oppressors. Their tribute is remitted for two years. They will not be troubled except for evil deeds."

Some of them alighted in Irâc, and settled in Najrânia, near to Cufa.

That the offence of usury is alleged in justification of this measure, appears to me to disprove the common tradition that a command was said to have been given by Mahomet on his death-bed for the Peninsula to be swept clear of all other religions but Islam.

* Sale has it—*Let us call together.* But if the text is rightly referred to the occasion of the Najrân embassy, it can only mean to "call *over and curse the names*;" because the wives and sons of the embassy were *not* at hand to summon.

of ourselves and yourselves; then let us curse one the other, and lay the curse of God upon those that lie!

Verily this is a true exposition. There is no God but the Lord, and verily God is mighty and wise. And if they turn back, verily God is acquainted with the evil doers.

Say:—Oh ye people of the Book! come unto a just judgment between us and you, *That we shall not worship aught but God, and that we shall not associate any with Him, nor shall we take any of us the other for Lords besides God.* And if they turn back, then bear witness, saying:—*Verily, we are the true believers.**

Proof of the earnestness of Mahomet.

It was surely a strange manner of settling the question which the Arabian Prophet here proposed, and we have no reason to be ashamed of the Christian embassy for declining it. Still we cannot but see in the passage the earnestness of Mahomet's belief, and his conviction that a spiritual illumination had been vouchsafed to him, bringing with it knowledge and certainty where to the Christian, as he conceived, all was speculation and conjecture.

Embassy of the Bani Taghlib.

Another Christian embassy was received from the Bani Taghlib. "It was formed of sixteen men, some Moslems and some Christians. The latter wore crosses of gold. And the prophet made terms with the Christians, stipulating that they should themselves continue in the profession of their religion, but should not baptize their children in the Christian faith."†

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* *Sura* iii. 57-63.

† *Kitáb al Wáckidi*, p. 614. The account of the embassy of the Bani Hanífa is more decidedly unfavourable to Christianity, but its details appear of doubtful authority. Moseilama, the false

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Christianity existed on sufferance.

These narratives clearly show that the terms upon which, at the last, Mahomet permitted Christianity to exist were those of sufferance merely; Christianity, indeed, was less obnoxious to him than Judaism, because he did not experience from it such persevering and active hostility. The Clergy and Monks are in the Coran on this account spoken of in expressions of comparative praise.* But, after all, his grand object was entirely to *supersede* Christianity as well as

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prophet, was among the number, and there are some unlikely anticipations of his sacrilegious claims.

As the embassy were departing, "Mahomet gave them a vessel in which were the leavings of the water with which he had performed his lustrations; and he said,—*When you reach your country, break down your Church, and sprinkle its site with this water, and make in its place a Mosque.* And they did so, and the vessel remained with Al Acksâs. And the Muedzzin called to prayers. And the Monk of the church heard him, and he exclaimed,—*It is the word of truth and the call of truth!* and he fled. And that was the last of the time (of Christianity). (p. 62).

The story appears improbable, because nowhere else is Mahomet represented as exhibiting such antagonism to Christians and their Churches, when they submitted themselves to him.

* See *Sura* lvii. 27. "And WE caused Jesus, son of Mary, to succeed them, and WE put into the hearts of those that followed him Compassion and Mercy; and the monastic state—*they* framed it for themselves (WE did not command it unto them) simply out of a desire to please God," &c.

So *Sura* v. 77 "And thou wilt find the most inclined amongst them to the believers, to be those who profess Christianity;—This because there are amongst them Clergy and Monks, and they are not proud; and when they hear that which hath been revealed unto the Prophet, thou shalt see their eyes flow with tears, because of what they recognise therein of the truth," &c.

Judaism, and the professors of both were subjected equally to a humiliating tribute.

The stealthy progress by which this end was reached has now, I trust, been made clear. The prophet at the first confirmed the Scriptures without qualification or reserve. He next asserted for his own revelation a parallel authority, and by degrees a superseding or dispensing power. And, finally, though he never imputed error to the Scripture itself, or (while ceasing to appeal with his former frequency to its evidence) failed to speak of it with veneration, he rejected all the dogmas peculiar to Christianity, and demanded their rejection by his Christian followers, on the simple ground of his own inspiration. Assuming, perhaps, that the former Scriptures could not be at variance with the mind of God as now revealed to himself, he cared not to verify his conclusions by a reference to "the Book." A latent consciousness of the weakness of his position probably rendered him unwilling honestly to face the difficulty. His course was guided here, as it was guided at so many other points, by an inexplicable combination of earnest conviction and uneasy questioning, if not of actual though unperceived self-deception. He was sure as to the object; and the means, he persuaded himself, could not be wrong. Review.

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Knowledge of Christianity whence derived?

It may be useful, in conclusion, to enquire briefly from what probable sources Mahomet obtained his meagre and deceptive information of Christianity.

Mahomet misinformed of the teaching of the Church regarding the Crucifixion of Jesus.

One of the most remarkable traits in the teaching of the Coran is, that Jesus was not crucified; but one resembling, and mistaken by, the Jews, for Jesus. This fact is alleged, as we have seen,* not in contradiction to the Christians, but, *in opposition to the Jews*, who gloried in the assertion that Jesus had been put to death by their nation. Hence it would almost seem that Mahomet believed his teaching on this head to be accordant with that of the Christian Church; and that he really was ignorant of the grand doctrine of the Christian faith, —Redemption through the death of Christ.

Connection of his teaching with Gnosticism.

The singular correspondence between the allusions to the crucifixion in the Coran, and the wild speculations of the early heretics, has led to the conjecture that Mahomet acquired his notions of Christianity from a Gnostic teacher. But Gnosticism had disappeared from Egypt before the sixth century, and there is no reason for supposing that it had at any time gained a footing in Arabia. Besides, there is not the slightest affinity between the supernaturalism of the Gnostics and Docetæ, and the sober rationalism of the Coran. According to the former, the Deity must be removed far from

* See the quotation from *Sura* iv. 155-158; above p. 286.

the gross contact of evil matter. The Æon Christ, which alighted upon Jesus at His baptism, must ascend to its native regions before the crucifixion. With Mahomet, on the contrary, Jesus Christ was a mere man,—wonderfully born indeed,—but still an ordinary man, a servant simply of the Almighty as others had been before him.* Yet, although there is no ground for believing that Gnostic doctrines were inculcated on Mahomet, it is possible that some of the strange fancies of those heretics, preserved in Syrian tradition, may have come to the ears of his informants (the chief of whom, even on Christian topics, seem to have been Jews, unable probably to distinguish heretical fable from Christian doctrine,) and have been by them adopted as a likely and convenient mode of explaining away the facts which formed the great barrier between Jews and Christians. The Israelite would have less antipathy to the Catholic faith of Islam and the recognition of the mission of Jesus, if allowed to believe that Christians as well as Jews had been in error, that his people had not, in fact, put Jesus, the promised Messiah, to a shameful death; but that, like Enoch and Elijah, he had been received up into heaven. "Christ *crucified*" was still, as in the days of Paul,

Denial of the Crucifixion a compromise between Jews and Christians.

* This subject has been well discussed by Gerock, who shows the utter incongruity of Islam with Gnosticism, *Christologie*, p. 11. Der positive besonnene character des Islam ist den Gnostischen speculationen ganzlich zuwider," (p. 12).

"the stumbling block of the Jews." But here the stumbling block could be at once removed: and without any offence to his national pride, the Jew might confess his belief in this emasculated Christianity. It was a compromise that would readily and strongly approve itself to a Jewish mind already unsettled by the prophetic claims of Mahomet.

Apocryphal Gospels not accessible to Mahomet.

By others it has been attempted to trace the Christian stories of the Coran to certain apocryphal Gospels supposed to have been within the reach of Mahomet. But, though some few of the details coincide with these spurious writings, the great body of the facts in no wise correspond.* Whereas, had there been a ready access to such books, we cannot doubt that Mahomet would, as in the case of Jewish history and legend, have borrowed largely from them.

Opinion of Gerock that his knowledge was derived from Christian tradition in Arabia.

Gerock, after weighing every consideration, concludes that Mahomet acquired his knowledge from no written source, but from Christian tradition *current among the people of Arabia*:—Am gerathensten möchte es daher wohl seyn, die Berichte

* See *Gerock*, p. 8. The "Gospel of Barnabas" is of course excepted, because it is the modern work of a Christian Apostate to Islam. "Aber es ist gewiss, dass diess Evangelium das Werk eines Betrügers ist, der erst lange nach Mohammed, vielleicht in Italien selbst, lebte, und sich bemühte, den Erzählungen des Koran und der Mohammedanischen Schriftsteller durch eine angeblich Christliche Unterlage mehr Ansehen und Glaubwürdigkeit, zu verschaffen." *Ibid.* p. 9.

des Coran über den stifter der Christlichen Religion aus der Tradition zu erklären. Es scheint nämlich, das Mohammed seine Berichte über Christus und einige andere, unbedeutende Erzählungen aus der Christengeschichte weder aus schriftlichen quellen, uls kanonischen oder apokryphischen evangelien, noch aus bestimmten mündlichen mittheilungen, sondern vornemlich aus einer in seinem Vaterlande umhergetragenen Volkstradition schöpfte.*

unsatisfactory

As the sole source of information the indigenous tradition of Arabia appears to me wholly insufficient to account for the knowledge of Mahomet upon the subject. There is not the slightest ground for believing that either at Mecca or Medina there existed elements of Christian tradition from which could have been framed a narrative agreeing, as that of the Coran does in many points, and even in several of its expressions, with the Gospels genuine and apocryphal, while in others it follows or outstrips the popular legend.

Syrian tradition the likeliest source of Mahomet's knowledge; derived chiefly through a Jewish, partly through a Christian channel.

But Tradition, quite sufficient for this end, survived in the southern confines of Syria, and no doubt reached Mahomet through both a Jewish and a Christian medium. The general outline of the Christian story in the Coran, having a few salient points in accordance with the Gospel and the rest filled up with wild marvels, is just such as

* *Christologie*, p. 13.

we might expect an enquiring Jew to learn from the traditions amongst the lower classes in Judea. Something might be learned too from the Christian slaves of Mecca; but they had generally been carried off from their homes in boyhood, and would remember little more than a few Scripture stories, with perhaps some fragments of the creed. Either the Jew or the Christian may also have heard the opening of the Gospel of Luke, and communicated to Mahomet the outline of the births of John and Jesus, which he transferred to the Coran. It is also *possible* that some one may have repeated to Mahomet from memory, or read to him from a manuscript, the verses of the Gospel containing these details;—but this is mere conjecture.*

Supported by other considerations.

Mahomet's confused notions of the blessed Trinity and of the Holy Ghost, seem most naturally to have been received through a Jewish informant, himself imperfectly acquainted with the subject.

The Trinity of the Coran and the Virgin Mary.

It is not very apparent, from the few indistinct notices in the Coran, what Mahomet believed the Christian doctrine of the Trinity to be. In a passage above quoted, Christians are reprobated for "taking Jesus and his Mother for two Gods besides

* It is doubtful whether any Arabic translation of the Scriptures, or any part of them, was ever within Mahomet's reach, notwithstanding the traditions regarding Waraca. See chapter II. p. 51. If there was such a translation it must have been most imperfect and fragmentary.

the Lord."* It is hence concluded that the Trinity of the Coran was composed of the Father, Mary, and Jesus. Such may have been the case, but it is not certain. Zealous Protestants sometimes use language resembling that verse, without actually imputing to their adversaries any error in their views of the Trinity. The reverence and service of Mary had long been carried to the pitch nearly of Divine worship, and the "orthodox" party had hotly persecuted those who would not accord to her the title of the "Mother of God."† Mahomet might possibly censure the Christians for this as "taking Jesus and his mother for two Gods," without adverting to the Trinity.

The Holy Ghost unknown to Mahomet, as a person in the Trinity.

On the other hand, the assertion that Mahomet believed Mary to be held by the Christians as Divine, is supported by his apparent ignorance of the Holy Ghost as a person in the Trinity. The only passage in which the Trinity is specifically mentioned,‡ makes no allusion to the divinity of the Spirit; nor are the expressions "the Spirit," and "the Holy Spirit," though occurring in numerous texts throughout the Coran, ever used as if in the

* *Sura* v. 125.

† Worship had been paid even to images of the Virgin and of Jesus from the fourth century. In the sixth century Gregory vainly endeavoured to prohibit the *worship*, while he encouraged the *use* of such images. See *Waddington's History of the Church*, vol. i. p. 295.

‡ *Sura* iv. 169.

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erroneous system of Christianity they signified a divine person. Those terms, as has been already shown,* commonly meant Gabriel, the messenger of God's revelations to Mahomet. It is probable that a confusion of Gabriel with the Holy Spirit may have arisen, in the prophet's mind, from the former having been the medium of the Annunciation, while Christians at the same time held that Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost.† The phrase is also repeatedly used in a more general sense as signifying *the Spirit of Inspiration*.‡ It was the divine "Spirit" breathed into the clay, which gave life to Adam;§ and Jesus, who like Adam, had no earthly father, is also "a Spirit from God" breathed into Mary.‖ When it is said that God "*strengthened Jesus with the Holy Spirit*,"¶ we may perhaps trace the use of current Christian speech, not inconsistent with Jewish ideas.**

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* See chapter iv. p. 138.

† *Luke* i. 35.

‡ *Sura* xvi. 2; xl. 16; xlii. 51.

§ *Sura* xv. 29.

‖ *Sura* xxi. 91; lxvi. 13; iv. 169.

¶ *Sura* ii. 87-254; v. 149; so lviii. 22.

** Compare *Psalm* li. 12; "Uphold me with thy free Spirit." Gerock, though not alluding to the same expression, comes to a similar conclusion: Das der heilige Geist der Christen dem Mohammed hier dunkel vorich webte, ist einleuchtend, besonders wenn wir bedenken, wie derselbe in dem Besuche bei Maria mit Gabriel in eine Person verschmilzt." (p. 79).

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Jewish and Christian prophecies and expectations.

The assurance with which Mahomet appeals to Jews and Christians as both possessing in their Scriptures the promise of a prophet to come, whom, if they only put aside their prejudices, they would at once recognize in Mahomet, "as they recognized their own sons," is very singular, and must have been supported by ignorant or designing men of both religions. It would seem that Mahomet seized upon two kinds of expectation of the most different, and indeed incompatible, character; and adroitly combined them into a cumulative proof of his own Mission. The Jewish anticipation of a Messiah was fused by Mahomet along with the perfectly distinct and even discordant anticipation by the Christians of the second Advent of Christ, into one irrefragable argument of a coming Prophet, expected both by Jews and Christians, and foretold in all the Scriptures.

Promises of the Paraclete

That the promise of the Paraclete was capable of perversion, we see in the heresy of Montanus, which made much progress at the close of the second Century. It would seem that a garbled version of the same promise was communicated to Mahomet, and thus employed by him:—

> And call to mind when JESUS, son of MARY, said;—Oh Children of Israel! Verily, I am an Apostle of God unto you, attesting the Towrât revealed before me, and giving good tidings of a prophet that shall come after me, whose name is AHMAD.*

* *Sura* lxi. 6. This is another form of the root *Muhammed*, signifying like it, "the Praised." See *John* xvi. 7, where παράκλητος

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and of the Messiah, perverted.

The prophecy of Moses to the Israelites, "God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, *of thy brethren*, like unto me,"* may plausibly have been adduced by a perverted Jew in favour of the Arabian Prophet. And other predictions referring to the Messiah were, no doubt, forced into a similar service.

Mahomet the Prophet looked for by both people.

That he was the Prophet promised to both Jews and Christians, lay at the root of the Catholic system so strongly inculcated by Mahomet in the middle stage of his course. He persuaded himself that it was so: and the assumption, once admitted, retained possession of his mind.

The Meccans taunt him with being prompted by others.

From this brief review we may conclude that, while some information regarding Christianity may have been drawn from ignorant Christian slaves or Christian Arabs, Mahomet gained his chief knowledge of Christianity through the same Jewish medium, by which, at an earlier period, the more copious details of Jewish history reached him. His Meccan adversaries did not conceal their strong suspicion that the prompting from which the Scriptural or legendary tales proceeded, was not solely that of a supernatural inspiration. They openly imputed the aid of strangers;—

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may in some imperfect or garbled translation have been rendered by *περιεκλυτός*.

* *Deut.* xviii. 15.

From whence shall there be an Admonition for them; for, verily, there hath come unto them an evident Apostle;—

Then they turn from him and say,—*One taught by others, a Madman!**

And the unbelievers say; *Verily, this is a Fraud which he hath fabricated; and other people have assisted him therein.* But they say that which is unjust and false.

They say; *They are Fables of the Ancients which he hath had written down; which are dictated unto him Morning and Evening,*†

Say:—He hath revealed it who knoweth that which is hidden in Heaven and in Earth. He is forgiving and merciful.‡

* * * * *

And Verily We know that they say,—*surely a certain man teacheth him.* The tongue of him whom they hint at is foreign, but this is in the tongue of simple Arabic.§

Promptings of ignorant Jews transformed into the divine Coran.

Whatever the rough material, its passage through the alembic of "simple Arabic" converted it at once into a gem of unearthly water. The recitations of a credulous and ill-informed Jew, reappeared as the inspirations of the Almighty, dictated by the noblest of his heavenly messengers.

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* *Sura* xliv. 14.

† Abdool Cadîr translates in Oordoo, "*which are written out beside him morning and evening;*" and thinks it necessary to add the following explanatory note:—"At first the times of prayer were appointed for the morning and evening. The Moslems used at those times to gather about the prophet. Whatever new passages of the Coran had descended they used to write down with the object of remembering them. The unbelievers thus misrepresent them." What a strange and gratuitous misinterpretation!

‡ *Sura* xxv. 5-6.

§ *Sura* xvi. 10.

The wild legend and the garbled Scripture story of yesterday, come forth to-morrow as a portion of the divine and eternal Coran.

Mahomet sincere in this belief.

And, however strange it may appear, the heavenly origin of his revelations, obtained though they were from such fallible and imperfect sources, appears to have been believed by Mahomet himself. It would be against the analogy of his entire life, to suppose a continuing sense of fraud,—a consciousness that the whole was a fabrication of his own mind, an imposition upon his followers, an impious assumption of the name of the Almighty. Occasional doubts and misgivings, especially when he first submitted to Jewish prompting, there may have been; but a process similar to that by which he first assured himself of his own inspiration, would quickly put them to flight.

But his ignorance became culpable when voluntary.

The absence of spiritual light and of opportunities for obtaining it which excused this marvellous self-deception in the early prophetical life of Mahomet, cannot be pleaded for his later years. Ignorance was no longer then involuntary. The means of reaching a truer knowledge lay plentifully within his reach. But they were not heeded; or rather they were deliberately rejected, because a position had been already taken up from which there could be no receding without discredit or inconsistency. The living inspiration of God vouchsafed to himself was surely better and more safe than the recorded

Revelations of former prophets; it was at any rate incomparably more authoritative than the uncertain doctrines deduced from them by their erring adherents. Thus did ignorance become wilful. Light was at hand; but Mahomet preferred darkness. He chose to walk "in the glimmerings of his own fire, and in the sparks which he had kindled."

If it please God to give the Author time and opportunity for pursuing the subject, frequent, and often melancholy, illustration will be afforded by the career of the Prophet at Medîna of that unconscious self-deception which can alone explain the mysterious foundation of a Faith strong but often descending to subterfuge, never wavering yet always inconsistent.

APPENDIX.

A LIST OF THE SURAS IN THE CORAN ARRANGED CHRONOLOGICALLY.

It is hardly necessary here to repeat that any attempt to reduce the Suras to a chronological order, must, to a great extent, be conjectural and imperfect. The statements of tradition on the subject are meagre and deceptive. The chronological lists given by Mahometan writers are based upon those statements and cannot be trusted.

The following classification is the result of a careful and repeated perusal; and is grounded upon a minute examination of the style and contents of the several Suras preceding the Hegira. It can of course be regarded at the best as only an approximation to the truth even as regards them. Of the twenty-one Medîna Suras, the Author has not yet had leisure to enquire carefully into the sequence.

To show the gradual lengthening of the Suras, a column is added giving the number of pages and lines of each, according to Flügel's quarto edition. The page contains twenty-two lines.

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF SURAS.

Number in Chronological order.	Number in the Coran.	Length.		Remarks.
		Pages.	Lines.	
1	CIII	0	1½	FIRST STAGE. Suras 1 to 18. See chapters II. and III.
2	C	0	4	
3	XCIX	0	3½	
4	XCI	0	5½	
5	CVI	0	2	
6	I	0	4	
7	CI	0	3½	
8	XCV	0	3½	
9	CII	0	3	
10	CIV	0	3	
11	LXXXII	0	7	
12	XCII	0	7	
13	CV	0	2	
14	LXXXIX	0	13	

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF SURAS.

Number in Chronological order.	Number in the Coran.	Length.		Remarks.
		Pages.	Lines.	
15	XC	0	8	
16	XCIII	0	4	
17	XCIV	0	2½	
18	CVIII	0	1	
19	XCVI	0	7	SECOND STAGE. Suras 19 to 22. Chap. III. Number 19 contains the command to "recite in the name of the Lord," and 21 to "arise and preach."
20	CXII	0	1	
21	LXXIV	1	1	
22	CXI	1	2	
23	LXXXVII	1	7	
24	XCVII	1	2½	
25	LXXXVIII	1	8	THIRD STAGE. Suras 23 to 41. From the commencement of Mahomet's public ministry to the first emigration to Abyssinia; chap. IV.
26	LXXX	1	13½	
27	LXXXI	1	10	
28	LXXXIV	1	10	
29	LXXXVI	1	6	
30	CX	1	1½	
31	LXXXV	1	10	
32	LXXXIII	1	16	
33	LXXVIII	1	17	
34	LXXVII	1	19	
35	LXXVI	1	19	
36	LXXV	1	15½	
37	LXX	1	15½	
38	CIX	1	2	
39	CVII	1	2½	
40	LV	1	14	
41	LVI	1	17	
42	LXVII	1	2	FOURTH STAGE. Suras 42 to 63. From the 6th to the 10th years of the mission of Mahomet.
43	LIII	1	11	
44	XXXII	1	10	
45	XXXIX	3	14	
46	LXXIII	3	17½	
47	LXXIX	3	17½	
48	LIV	1	10	
49	XXXIV	3	8	
50	XXXI	2	1	
51	LXIX	1	2	
52	LXVIII	1	7	
53	XLI	3	4	
54	LXXI	3	20	
55	LII	1	7	
56	L	1	11	
57	XLV	1	21	
58	XLIV	1	12	
59	XXXVII	4	12	
60	XXX	3	6	
61	XXVI	5	15	
62	XV	2	17	
63	LI	1	12	
64	XLVI	2	11	FIFTH STAGE. Suras 64 to 91.

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CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF SURAS.

Number in Chronological order.	Number in the Coran.	Length.		Remarks.
		Pages.	Lines.	
65	LXXII	1	2	
66	XXXV	3		
67	XXXVI	3		
68	XIX	3	17	
69	XVIII	6	4	
70	XXVII	4	13	
71	XLII	3	7	
72	XL	4	17	
73	XXXVIII	3		
74	XXV	3	13	
75	XX	5	7	
76	XLIII	3	10	
77	XII	6	20	
78	XI	7	6	
79	X	7		
80	XIV	3	6	
81	VI	11	15	
82	LXIV	1		
83	XXVIII	5	11	
84	XXIII	4	6	
85	XXII	5		
86	XXI	4	18	
87	XVII	6	4	
88	XVI	7	6	
89	XIII	3	6	
90	XXIX	4	6	
91	VII	13	3	Suras 113 and 114. Time of appearance indeterminate, and unimportant.
92	CXIII	0	2	
93	CXIV	0	2	
94	II	22	12	MEDINA SURAS. 94 to 114.
95	XLVII	2	5	
96	LVII	2	7	[N.B. The order of these 21 suras has not yet been carefully fixed by the Author.]
97	VIII	4	19	
98	LVIII	1	19	
99	LXV	1	2	
100	XCVIII	1	8	
101	LXII	1	15	
102	LIX	1	17	
103	XXIV	5	5	
104	LXIII	1	16	
105	XLVIII	2	6	
106	LXI	2	21	
107	IV	14	14	
108	III	13	11	
109	V	10	18	
110	XXXIII	5	6	
111	LX	1	9	
112	LXVI	1	3	
113	XLIX	1	9	
114	IX	9	20	

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POSTSCRIPT.

I have received and corrected the proofs of the last fifty-six pages under difficulties. All my MSS. and books of reference have been placed in security from the ravages of our mutineer army, and are inaccessible to me at present. I beg the reader's indulgence for inaccuracies.

W. M.

Fort Agra,
18th July, 1857.

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